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A SCHEME OF EDUCATION

By

Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya

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PREFACE

This scheme is written to help a group of people who wanted to organise Physical Education. As physical education cannot go all alone, divorced from other education such as vital, mental, psychic and spiritual and general education, so all the branches of education were included and touched in this scheme.

An appendix is added for consultation of important references and a special appendix is also included to give a broader knowledge about our ideal, for those who want to study in further details.

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A SCHEME OF EDUCATION

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A SCHEME OF EDUCATION

PRESENT CONDITION OF MAN

MAN is now in confusion. The old ideal of life which has brought him so far is unable to push him any further. He is trying to find out something and makes experiments with whatever crosses his mind; all that is nothing but a search in the darkness and instead of solving the problems of modern man he is only making them more and more complicated. Everybody is losing hope and feeling helpless. Despondency is reigning everywhere, nobody is sure about his safety. Slowly all the inner and finer qualities of man are leaving him and thus he becomes increasingly gross and self-centred. As a consequence his difficulties are equally increasing. In all spheres of his activities, moral, social, intellectual, economic, political, creative and others, his progress is halted. Man does not know what to do.

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Reason

The reason is that either there is no ideal of life or that people still have those old ideas which in the present circumstances do not fit in. When there is no solid base on which life can be built or organised, it is naturally bound to be in a chaos and confusion.

True ideal of life

See the Mother's writing on "The Science of Living" and the Special Appendix.

The way

So the best way to lift the people out of their difficulties is to hold the true ideal before them and to educate them according to this ideal.

For that, is needed:

(i) A batch of people or leaders who will work. They should be honest, sincere, free from any kind of prejudices. They must have a broad outlook, and an ever-progressive attitude. They should have the true ideal and

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apply it on every occasion of life, ready to sacrifice anything and everything for the execution of the cause.

(ii) The understanding of what is true education. (See the Mother's writings on Education and Sri Aurobindo's "Brain of India", "A System of National Education" and "A Preface on National Education").

(iii) A scheme for the organisation and methods to carry out the task of educating the people.

The Scheme

There must be a central body consisting of people who have achieved all the qualities mentioned above. They will be engaged in educating the people from four points of view:—

(i) Physical.
(ii) Vital.
(iii) Mental.
(iv) Psychic and Spiritual.

Each section will work for the culture and understanding of its own subject quite inde-

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pendently but in collaboration with others and must see that no special emphasis falls on one subject or the other but that the four things are carried out, given an equal importance.

This body will select a number of people who have the true capacity to lead and have all the qualities of a leader mentioned above. They should be trained in all the four branches of education and when they are ready, each one will be given the charge of a Province where he will open a centre. These again will select and prepare leaders to open centres in every division. In the same way centres will be opened from the divisions to districts, from the districts to sub-divisions, from the sub-divisions to unions and from the unions to the villages. In this way there will be educative centres everywhere all over the province. Each centre will work for educating the people of that place, always keeping in touch with the central body to which reports on the work will be sent regularly.

Physical Education

(See Message—by Sri Aurobindo)

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It has two branches:—

a) Health Education.
b) Physical Training.

Health Education

The purpose of Health Education will be:—

(i) To give information and education to the people about health and hygiene.

(ii) To look after the sanitation and cleanliness of the place.

(iii) To prevent and fight diseases and infections.

(iv) To arrange periodical health examination of the people and attend those who need special attention.

(v) To look after the purity of food and drink produced and sold in the country.

Physical Training

It has four branches:—

(a) Corrective measures for the defective and deficient children.

(b) Well-planned programme for normal children.

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(c) To organise competitions in different branches of physical education.

(d) To organise demonstrations of physical performances of the different branches of physical education.

Corrective Measures

Physically defective and deficient children should be separated from the normal children. A suitable programme should be made to correct their defects. Arrangements should be made to give them recreation and entertainment and the programme planned in such a way that instead of feeling it to be a troublesome burden and a period of boredom, they will like it. As the children improve and become free from their defects, they can be taken into normal groups and given the normal programme.

Well-planned programme for normal Children

A complete programme for Physical Education is to be made for this group. Upto a certain age (18 years), the activities should be as varied as possible for the harmonious growth and

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development of all the parts and capacities of the body. They should be encouraged to take part in all the activities. The thought of specialisation in one or more subjects should not be brought in before a certain age (18 years), after which, if they like, they can go for specialisation. But still provision and opportunities should be kept for those who want to take part in all the activities.

The subject must be varied, i.e., Gymnastics, Athletics, Games, Aquatics, Combatives, Rhythmics, etc. All to be blended in a programme, which will be followed throughout the year to fit every requirement of the body without giving a special emphasis on one subject or another. Thus progress will not be in a straight line but in a spiral movement which will include everything. An example of the programme may be seen from the organisation of J.S.A.S.A. But one thing should be taught to the children that they must understand the capacities of their body and stop when they have reached the limit of the endurance of the body. When they know it well, then whatever they do and as many things they take up, they

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will know where to stop and in this way avoid overdoing and accidents.

Though the programme should be varied, yet in the beginning of an organisation one must not aim at a big start. One must make a modest beginning and be satisfied with what is easily available, advancing in a progressive manner, while keeping the broad vision always in front.

The programme of the different age groups may be arranged as follows:—

(i) Children under 5 years

They can be given free play in the open air under proper supervision.

(ii) From 5-10 years

They can be given free play and varieties of simple and minor games in the open air and can be taught very simple calisthenic exercises for the proper development of the different parts of the body. Attention should be paid to bring to them the sense of grace, harmony and beauty

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in each movement. Thus their body will be prepared for advanced training which will come when they grow up.

(iii) From 11-14 years

In addition to the programme of the 2nd group they can be taught the preliminary technique of all the different branches of Physical Education.

(iv) From 15-18 years

Now more concentration should be given for the proper and proportionate development of all the parts of the body through body-building exercises. At this age they can start to learn in details all the technique of the different branches of Physical Education.

In no way a child before the age of 18 should make any vigorous effort or strain himself in doing physical exercises. It is only after 18 years that they should put their maximum effort, but still refrain from all kinds of overdoing and straining.

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To organise competitions in different branches of Physical Education

In order to give a stimulus for keeping up interest and enthusiasm, competitions in different branches of Physical Education are to be organised and the successful performers may be awarded prizes.

The competitions can go on all through the year, devoting certain time to each subject. How the practices as well as the competitions can be carried out side by side all through the year will be found by studying the organisation of J.S.A.S.A.

Naturally with the competitions the children should be taught the spirit of fair play without which the thing turns out to be meaningless.

To organise demonstrations

For mutual understanding and exchange of ideas and growth of fellow feeling, some festival of Physical Education is to be organised. There, arrangements will be made for the demonstration of the different branches of Physical Edu-

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cation. As an example we give below a sketch of how it can be organised in India.

Two days in a year, once on the 21st February and then on the 15th August, there will be a festival of Physical Education.

On the 21st February, the festival will be in each centre, in each village. A programme should be made for the day and the demonstration will be made on a mass scale.

On the 15th August, all the centres will meet in one centre and each one will give its performance, showing the speciality of the centre, if any. This central meeting will be held by turn in one district every year. In the same way all the provinces can meet in one province once in every four years.

See the Mother's writings on the Physical Education for further details.

Vital Education

All about Vital Education is discussed in the Mother's writing on "Vital Education."

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People should be educated through exhibitions and teaching to understand, appreciate and develop all kinds of arts, literature, poetry, music, etc., so that their vital being gets trained in refinement and beauty.

Mental Education

Consult the Mother's writing on "Mental Education".

General Education of the People

General Education will be compulsory for everybody from the age of 4 to 14. During this time, the children will learn to read, write and speak as well as possible in their own mother tongue. They will be taught also preliminary lessons in Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and their national language.

After the 14th year the students should be divided into two groups:—

i) Those who are interested, successful and want to continue their studies.

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ii) Those who are not so very successful.

The first batch of children will continue their studies in greater detail and afterwards will specialise in a subject according to their interests and aptitudes, to become Scientists, Engineers, Doctors, Administrators, Industrialists, Educationists, etc., each serving the Nation according to his point of view.

The second batch of students should be taken for education in different trades according to their interests and aptitudes. There should be different centres under expert guidance, organised by the Government for the maintenance and progress of various trades in the country, such as agriculture and food production, craftsmanship of various kinds, etc., where these children will be taken as apprentices, for a certain number of years. When they will have learnt their work, they will be either employed by the Government in different centres of activities, or given opportunities for private enterprises. Financially the condition of everybody in the country should be such that all would have a decent, healthy, simple and beautiful life. All kinds of exploitation over

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others should be stopped rigorously. All work should be done for the sake of the country and not to satisfy any personal greed. To begin with, governments must be free from all corruption and when this is realised, then only one can think of nationalising all activities. Meanwhile everybody should be taught that the work he does must be done in a spirit of service and offering to all.

Psychic and Spiritual Education

See the Mother's writing about this subject.

It should be borne in mind that man and woman should be given equal rights and opportunities in every sphere of life.

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APPENDIX

I. THE SCIENCE OF LIVING—*The Mother*
(From Bulletin Vol. 2 No. 4, Page 15.)

II. A TRUE NATIONAL EDUCATION—*Sri Aurobindo*
(From "A Preface on National Education" Arya 1921 January. Printed for the second time in Bulletin Vol. 3 No. 1, Page 2.)

III. A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION—*Sri Aurobindo*

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V. EDUCATION I—*The Mother*
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X. MESSAGE—*Sri Aurobindo*
(Taken from Bulletin Vol. 1 No. 1, Page 4.)

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I. THE SCIENCE OF LIVING

To Know Oneself and to Control Oneself

An aimless life is always a miserable life.

Everyone of you should have an aim. But do not forget that on the quality of your aim will depend the quality of your life.

Your aim should be high and wide, generous and disinterested; this will make your life precious to yourself and to all.

But whatever your ideal, it cannot be perfectly realised unless you have realised perfection in yourself.

To work for your perfection the first step is to become conscious of yourself, of the different parts of your being and their respective activities. You must learn to distinguish these different parts one from the other, so that you may find out clearly the origin of the movements that occur in you, the many impulses, reactions, and conflicting wills that drive you to action. It is an assiduous study which demands much perseverance and sincerity. For man's nature, specially his mental nature, has a spontaneous tendency to give an explanation favourable to whatever he thinks, feels, says and does. It is only by observing these movements with great care, by bringing them, as it were, before the tribunal of our highest ideal, with a sincere will to submit to its judgment, that we can hope to educate in us a discernment which does not err. For if we truly want to

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progress and acquire the capacity of knowing the truth of our being, that is to say, the one thing for which we have been really created, that which we can call our mission upon earth, then we must, in a very regular and constant manner, reject from us or eliminate in us whatever contradicts the truth of our existence, whatever is in opposition to it. It is thus that little by little all the parts, all the elements of our being, could be organised into a homogeneous whole around our psychic centre. This work of unification demands a long time to be brought to some degree of perfection. Hence, to accomplish it, we must arm ourselves with patience and endurance, determined to prolong our life as far as it is necessary for the success of our endeavour.

As we pursue this labour of purification and unification, we must at the same time take great care to perfect the external and instrumental part of our being. When the higher truth will manifest, it must find in you a mental being subtle and rich enough to be able to give to the idea seeking to express itself a form of thought which preserves its force and clarity. This thought, again, when it seeks to clothe itself in words must find in you a sufficient power of expression so that the words reveal and not deform the thought. And this formula in which you embody the truth should be made articulate in all your sentiments, all your willings and acts, all the movements of your being. Finally, these movements themselves should, by constant effort, attain their highest perfection.

All this can be realised by means of a fourfold discipline the general outline of which is given here. These four aspects of the discipline do not exclude each other, one can follow them all at the same time, indeed it is better to do

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so. The starting-point is what can be called the psychic discipline. We give the name 'psychic' to the psychological centre of our being, the seat within of the highest truth of our existence, that which can know and manifest this truth. It is therefore of capital importance for us to become conscious of its presence within us, to concentrate on this presence and make it a living fact for us and identify ourselves with it.

Through space and time many methods have been framed to attain this perception and finally to achieve this identification. Some methods are psychological, some religious, some even mechanical. In reality, everyone has to find out that which suits him best, and if one has a sincere and steady aspiration, a persistent and dynamic will, one is sure to meet in one way or another, externally by study and instruction, internally by concentration, meditation, revelation and experience, the help one needs to reach the goal. Only one thing is absolutely indispensable: the will to discover and realise. This discovery and this realisation should be the primary occupation of the being, the pearl of great price which one should acquire at any cost. Whatever you do, whatever your occupation and activity, the will to find the truth of your being and to unite with it must always be living, always present behind all that you do, all that you experience, all that you think.

To complete this movement of inner discovery, it is good not to neglect the mental development. For the mental instrument can be equally a great help or a great hindrance. In its natural state the human mind is always limited in its vision, narrow in its understanding, rigid in its conceptions, and a certain effort is needed to enlarge

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it, make it supple and deep. Hence, it is very necessary that one should consider everything from as many points of view as possible. There is an exercise in this connection which gives great suppleness and elevation to thought. It is as follows. A clearly formulated thesis is set; against it is opposed the antithesis, formulated with the same precision. Then by careful reflection the problem must be widened or transcended so that a synthesis is found which unites the two contraries in a larger, higher and more comprehensive idea.

Many exercises of the same kind can be undertaken; some have a beneficial effect on the character and so possess a double advantage, that of educating the mind and that of establishing control over one's feelings and their results. For example, you must not allow your mind to judge things and people; for the mind is not an instrument of knowledge—it is incapable of finding knowledge—but it must be moved by knowledge. Knowledge belongs to a region much higher than that of the human mind, even beyond the region of pure ideas. The mind has to be made silent and attentive in order to receive knowledge from above and manifest it. For it is an instrument of formation, organisation and action. And it is in these functions that it attains its full value and real utility.

Another practice may be very helpful for the progress of the consciousness. Whenever there is a disagreement on any matter, as a decision to take, or an act to accomplish, one must not stick to one's own conception or point of view. On the contrary, one must try to understand the other's point of view, put oneself in his place and, instead of quarrelling or even fighting, find out a solution which

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can reasonably satisfy both parties; there is always one for men of goodwill.

Here must be mentioned the training of the vital. The vital being in us is the seat of impulses and desires, of enthusiasm and violence, of dynamic energy and desperate depression, of passions and revolt. It can set in motion everything, build up and realise, it can also destroy and mar everything. It seems to be, in the human being, the most difficult part to train. It is a long labour requiring great patience, and it demands a perfect sincerity, for without sincerity one will deceive oneself from the very first step, and all endeavour for progress will go in vain. With the collaboration of the vital no realisation seems impossible, no transformation impracticable. But the difficulty lies in securing this constant collaboration. The vital is a good worker, but most often it seeks its own satisfaction. If that is refused, totally or even partially, it gets vexed, sulky and goes on strike. As a result the energy disappears more or less completely and leaves in its place disgust for people and things, discouragement or revolt, depression and dissatisfaction. At these moments one must remain quiet and refuse to act; for it is at such times that one does stupid things and in a few minutes can destroy or spoil what one has gained in months of regular effort, losing thus all the progress made. These crises are of less duration and are less dangerous in the case of those who have established a contact with their psychic being sufficient to keep alive in them the flame of aspiration and the consciousness of the ideal to be realised. They can, with the help of this consciousness, deal with their vital as one deals with a child in revolt, with patience and perseverance showing it the truth and light,

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endeavouring to convince it and awaken in it the goodwill which for a moment was veiled. With the help of such patient intervention each crisis can be changed into a new progress, into a further step forward towards the goal. Progress may be slow, falls may be frequent, but if a courageous will is maintained one is sure to triumph one day and see all difficulties melt away and vanish before the radiant consciousness of truth.

Lastly, we must, by means of a rational and clear-seeing physical education, make our body strong and supple so that it may become in the material world a fit instrument for the truth-force which wills to manifest through us.

In fact, the body must not rule, it has to obey. By its very nature it is a docile and faithful servant. Unfortunately it has not often the capacity of discernment with regard to its masters, the mind and the vital. It obeys them blindly, at the cost of its own well-being. The mind with its dogmas, its rigid and arbitrary principles, the vital with its passions, its excesses and dissipations soon do everything to destroy the natural balance of the body and create in it fatigue, exhaustion and disease. It must be freed from this tyranny; that can be done only through a constant union with the psychic centre of the being. The body has a wonderful capacity of adaptation and endurance. It is fit to do so many more things than one can usually imagine. If instead of the ignorant and despotic masters that govern it, it is ruled by the central truth of the being, one will be surprised at what it is capable of doing. Calm and quiet, strong and poised, it will at every minute put forth the effort that is demanded of it, for it will have learnt to find rest in action, to replace through contact with the universal forces the energies it

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spends consciously and usefully. In this sound and balanced life a new harmony will manifest in the body, reflecting the harmony of the higher regions which will give it the perfect proportions and the ideal beauty of form. And this harmony will be progressive, for the truth of the being is never static, it is a continual unfolding of a growing, a more and more global and comprehensive perfection. As soon as the body learns to follow the movement of a progressive harmony, it will be possible for it, through a continuous process of transformation, to escape the necessity of disintegration and destruction. Thus the irrevocable law of death will have no reason for existing any more.

As we rise to this degree of perfection which is our goal, we shall perceive that the truth we seek is made up of four major aspects: Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty. These four attributes of the Truth will spontaneously express themselves in our being. The psychic will be the vehicle of true and pure love, the mind that of infallible knowledge, the vital will manifest an invincible power and strength and the body will be the expression of a perfect beauty and a perfect harmony.

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II. A TRUE NATIONAL EDUCATION

FIRST it is necessary to disengage from all ambiguities what we understand by a true education, its essential sense, its fundamental aim and significance. For we can then be sure of our beginnings and proceed securely to fix the just place and whole bearing of the epithet we seek to attach to the word. I must be sure what education itself is or should be before I can be sure what a national education is or should be. Let us begin then with our initial statement, as to which I think there can be no great dispute that there are three things which have to be taken into account in a true and living education, the man, the individual in his commonness and in his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity. It follows that that alone will be a true and living education which helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man, and which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with that great total life, mind and soul of humanity of which he himself is a unit and his people or nation a living, a separate and yet inseparable member. It is by considering the whole question in the light of this large and entire principle that we can best arrive at a clear idea of what we would have our education to be and what we shall strive to accomplish by a national education. Most is this largeness of view and foundation needed here and now in India, the whole energy of whose life purpose must be at this critical turning of her

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destinies directed to her one great need, to find and rebuild her true self in individual and in people and to take again, thus repossessed of her inner greatness, her due and natural portion and station in the life of the human race.

There are however very different conceptions possible of man and his life, of the nation and its life and of humanity and the life of the human race, and our idea and endeavour in education may well vary considerably according to that difference. India has always had her own peculiar conception and vision of these things and we must see whether it is not really, as it is likely to be, that which will be or ought to be at the very root of our education and the one thing that will give it its truly national character. Man has not been seen by the thought of India as a living body developed by physical Nature which has evolved certain vital propensities, an ego, a mind and a reason, an animal of the genus and in our case of the species *homo indicus*, whose whole life and education must be turned towards a satisfaction of these propensities under the government of a trained mind and reason and for the best advantage of the personal and the national ego. It has not been either the turn of her mind to regard man pre-eminently as a reasoning animal, or let us say, widening the familiar definition, a thinking, feeling and willing natural existence, a mental son of physical Nature, and his education as a culture of the mental capacities, or to define him as a political, social and economic being and his education as a training that will fit him to be an efficient, productive and well disciplined member of the society and the State. All these are no doubt aspects of the human being and she has given them a considerable prominence subject to her larger vision, but they are outward things,

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parts of the instrumentation of his mind, life and action, not the whole of the real man.

India has seen always in man the individual a soul, a portion of the Divinity enwrapped in mind and body, a conscious manifestation in Nature of the universal self and spirit. Always she has distinguished and cultivated in him a mental, an intellectual, an ethical, dynamic and practical, an aesthetic and hedonistic, a vital and physical being, but all these have been seen as powers of a soul that manifests through them and grows with their growth, and yet they are not all the soul, because at the summit of its ascent it arises to something greater than them all, into a spiritual being, and it is in this that she has found the supreme manifestation of the soul of man and his ultimate divine manhood, his *paramārtha* and highest *purushārtha*. And similarly India has not understood by the nation or people any organised State or an armed and efficient community well prepared for the struggle of life and putting all at the service of the national ego,—that is only the disguise of iron armour which masks and encumbers the national Purusha,—but a great communal soul and life that has appeared in the whole and has manifested a nature of its own and a law of that nature, a Swabhava and Swadharma, and embodied it in its intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, dynamic, social and political forms and culture. And equally then our cultural conception of humanity must be in accordance with her ancient vision of the universal manifesting in the human race, evolving through life and mind but with a high ultimate spiritual aim, —it must be the idea of the spirit, the soul of humanity advancing through struggle and concert towards oneness, increasing its experience and maintaining a needed diversity through the varied culture and life motives of its many

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peoples, searching for perfection through the development of the powers of the individual and his progress towards a diviner being and life, but feeling out too though more slowly after a similar perfectibility in the life of the race. It may be disputed whether this is a true account of the human or the national being, but if it is once admitted as a true description, then it should be clear that the only true education will be that which will be an instrument for this real working of the spirit in the mind and body of the individual and the nation. That is the principle on which we must build, that the central motive and the guiding ideal. It must be an education that for the individual will make its one central object the growth of the soul and its powers and possibilities, for the nation will keep first in view the preservation, strengthening and enrichment of the nation-soul and its dharma and raise both into powers of the life and ascending mind and soul of humanity. And at no time will it lose sight of man's highest object, the awakening and development of his spiritual being.

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III. A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

(I)

THE HUMAN MIND

THE true basis of education is the study of the human mind, infant, adolescent and adult. Any system of education founded on theories of academic perfection, which ignores the instrument of study, is more likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind. For the educationist has to do, not with dead material like the artist or sculptor, but with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism. He cannot shape an educational masterpiece out of human wood or stone; he has to work in the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body.

There can be no doubt that the current educational system of Europe is a great advance on many of the methods of antiquity, but its defects are also palpable. It is based on an insufficient knowledge of human psychology, and it is only safeguarded in Europe from disastrous results by the refusal of the ordinary student to subject himself to the processes it involves, his habit of studying only so much as he must to avoid punishment or to pass an immediate test, his resort to active habits and vigorous physical exercise. In India the disastrous effects of the system on body, mind and character are only too apparent. The first problem in a national system of education is to give an education as comprehensive as the European and more thorough, without

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the evils of strain and cramming. This can only be done by studying the instruments of knowledge and finding a system of teaching which shall be natural, easy and effective. It is only by strengthening and sharpening these instruments to their utmost capacity that they can be made effective for the increased work which modern conditions require. The muscles of the mind must be thoroughly trained by simple and easy means; then, and not till then, great feats of intellectual strength can be required of them.

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or task-master, he is a helper and a guide. His business is to suggest and not to impose. He does not actually train the pupil's mind, he only shows him how to perfect his instruments of knowledge and helps and encourages him in the process. He does not impart knowledge to him, he shows him how to acquire knowledge for himself. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to rise to the surface. The distinction that reserves this principle for the teaching of adolescent and adult minds and denies its application to the child, is a conservative and unintelligent doctrine. Child or man, boy or girl, there is only one sound principle of good teaching. Difference of age only serves to diminish or increase the amount of help and guidance necessary; it does not change its nature.

The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he himself who must be induced to expand in accordance with his own nature. There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange

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beforehand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues, or be prepared for a pre-arranged career. To force the nature to abandon its own *dharma* is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection. It is a selfish tyranny over a human soul and a wound to the nation, which loses the benefit of the best that a man could have given it and is forced to accept instead something imperfect and artificial, second-rate, perfunctory and common. Every one has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere which God offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop it and use it. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use.

The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be. The basis of a man's nature is almost always, in addition to his soul's past, his heredity, his surroundings, his nationality, his country, the soil from which he draws sustenance, the air which he breathes, the sights, sounds, habits to which he is accustomed. They mould him not the less powerfully because insensibly, and from that then we must begin. We must not take up the nature by the roots from the earth in which it must grow or surround the mind with images and ideas of a life which is alien to that in which it must physically move. If anything has to be brought in from outside, it must be offered, not forced on the mind. A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development. There are souls which naturally revolt from their surroundings and seem to belong to another age and clime. Let them be free to follow their

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bent; but the majority languish, become empty, become artificial, if artificially moulded into an alien form. It is God's arrangement that they should belong to a particular nation, age, society, that they should be children of the past, possessors of the present, creators of the future. The past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit. Each must have its due and natural place in a national system of education.

(2)

THE POWERS OF THE MIND

THE instrument of the educationist is the mind or *antaḥkaraṇa*, which consists of four layers. The reservoir of past mental impressions, the *citta* or storehouse of memory, which must be distinguished from the specific act of memory, is the foundation on which all the other layers stand. All experience lies within us as passive or potential memory; active memory selects and takes what it requires from that storehouse. But the active memory is like a man searching among a great mass of locked-up material; sometimes he cannot find what he wants; often in his rapid search he stumbles across many things for which he has no immediate need; often too he blunders and thinks he has found the real thing when it is something else, irrelevant if not valueless, on which he has laid his hand. The passive memory or *citta* needs no training, it is automatic and naturally sufficient to its task; there is not the slightest object of knowledge coming within its field which is not secured, placed and faultlessly preserved in that admirable

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receptacle. It is the active memory, a higher but less perfectly developed function, which is in need of improvement.

The second layer is the mind proper or *manas*, the sixth sense of our Indian psychology, in which all the others are gathered up. The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, the five senses and translate these again into thought-sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions. These sensations and impressions are the material of thought, not thought itself; but it is exceedingly important that thought should work on sufficient and perfect material. It is, therefore, the first business of the educationist to develop in the child the right use of the six senses; to see that they are not stunted or injured by disuse, but trained by the child himself under the teacher's direction to that perfect accuracy and keen subtle sensitiveness of which they are capable. In addition, whatever assistance can be gained by the organs of action, should be thoroughly employed. The hand, for instance, should be trained to reproduce what the eye sees and the mind senses. The speech should be trained to a perfect expression of the knowledge which the whole *antaḥkaraṇa* possesses.

The third layer is the intellect or *buddhi*, which is the real instrument of thought and that which orders and disposes of the knowledge acquired by the other parts of the machine. For the purpose of the educationist this is infinitely the most important of the three I have named. The intellect is an organ composed of several groups of functions, divisible into two important classes, the functions and faculties of the right hand, the functions and faculties of the left hand. The faculties of the right hand are com-

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prehensive, creative and synthetic; the faculties of the left hand critical and analytic. To the right hand belong judgment, imagination, memory, observation; to the left hand comparison and reasoning. The critical faculties distinguish, compare, classify, generalise, deduce, infer, conclude; they are the component parts of the logical reason. The right-hand faculties comprehend, command, judge in their own right, grasp, hold and manipulate. The right-hand mind is the master of the knowledge, the left-hand its servant. The left-hand touches only the body of knowledge, the right-hand penetrates its soul. The left-hand limits itself to ascertained truth, the right-hand grasps that which is still elusive or unascertained. Both are essential to the completeness of the human reason. These important functions of the machine have all to be raised to their highest and finest working-power, if the education of the child is not to be imperfect and one-sided.

There is a fourth layer of faculty which, not as yet entirely developed in man, is attaining gradually to a wider development and more perfect evolution. The powers peculiar to this highest stratum of knowledge are chiefly known to us from the phenomena of genius,—sovereign discernment, intuitive perception of truth, plenary inspiration of speech, direct vision of knowledge to an extent often amounting to revelation, making a man a prophet of truth. These powers are rare in their higher development, though many possess them imperfectly or by flashes. They are still greatly distrusted by the critical reason of mankind because of the admixture of error, caprice and a biassed imagination which obstructs and distorts their perfect workings. Yet it is clear that humanity could not have advanced to its present stage if it had not been for the

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help of these faculties, and it is a question with which educationists have not yet grappled, what is to be done with this mighty and baffling element, the element of genius in the pupil. The mere instructor does his best to discourage and stifle genius, the more liberal teacher welcomes it. Faculties so important to humanity cannot be left out of our consideration. It is foolish to neglect them. Their imperfect development must be perfected, the admixture of error, caprice and biassed fancifulness must be carefully and wisely removed. But the teacher cannot do it; he would eradicate the good corn as well as the tares if he interfered. Here, as in all educational operations, he can only put the growing soul into the way of its own perfection.

(3)

THE MORAL NATURE

In the economy of man the mental nature rests upon the moral, and the education of the intellect divorced from the perfection of the moral and emotional nature is injurious to human progress. Yet, while it is easy to arrange some kind of curriculum or syllabus which will do well enough for the training of the mind, it has not yet been found possible to provide under modern conditions a suitable moral training for the school and college. The attempt to make boys moral and religious by the teaching of moral and religious text-books is a vanity and a delusion, precisely because the heart is not the mind and to instruct the mind does not necessarily improve the heart. It would be an

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error to say that it has no effect. It throws certain seeds of thought into the *antaḥkaraṇa* and, if these thoughts become habitual, they influence the conduct. But the danger of moral text-books is that they make the thinking of high things mechanical and artificial, and whatever is mechanical and artificial is inoperative for good.

There are three things which are of the utmost importance in dealing with a man's moral nature, the emotions, the *saṁskāras* or formed habits and associations, and the *svabhāva* or nature. The only way for him to train himself morally is to habituate himself to the right emotions, the noblest associations, the best mental, emotional and physical habits and the following out in right action of the fundamental impulses of his essential nature. You can impose a certain discipline on children, dress them into a certain mould, lash them into a desired path, but unless you can get their hearts and natures on your side, the conformity to this imposed rule becomes a hypocritical and heartless, a conventional, often a cowardly compliance. This is what is done in Europe, and it leads to that remarkable phenomenon known as the sowing of wild oats as soon as the yoke of discipline at school and at home is removed, and to the social hypocrisy which is so large a feature of European life. Only what the man admires and accepts, becomes part of himself; the rest is a mask. He conforms to the discipline of society as he conformed to the moral routine of home and school, but considers himself at liberty to guide his real life, inner and private, according to his own likings and passions. On the other hand, to neglect moral and religious education altogether is to corrupt the race. The notorious moral corruption in our young men previous to the saving touch of the Swadeshi movement

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was the direct result of the purely mental instruction given to them under the English system of education. The adoption of the English system under an Indian disguise in institutions like the Central Hindu College is likely to lead to the European result. That it is better than nothing, is all that can be said for it.

As in the education of the mind, so in the education of the heart, the best way is to put the child into the right road to his own perfection and encourage him to follow it, watching, suggesting, helping, but not interfering. The one excellent element in the English boarding school is that the master at his best stands there as a moral guide and example, leaving the boys largely to influence and help each other in following the path silently shown to them. But the method practised is crude and marred by the excess of outer discipline, for which the pupils have no respect except that of fear and the exiguity of the inner assistance. The little good that is done is outweighed by much evil. The old Indian system of the *Guru* commanding by his knowledge and sanctity the implicit obedience, perfect admiration, reverent emulation of the student was a far superior method of moral discipline. It is impossible to restore that ancient system; but it is not impossible to substitute the wise friend, guide and helper for the hired instructor or the benevolent policeman which is all that the European system usually makes of the pedagogue.

The first rule of moral training is to suggest and invite, not command or impose. The best method of suggestion is by personal example, daily converse and the books read from day to day. These books should contain, for the younger student, the lofty examples of the past given, not as moral lessons, but as things of supreme human

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interest, and, for the elder student, the great thoughts of great souls, the passages of literature which set fire to the highest emotions and prompt the highest ideals and aspirations, the records of history and biography which exemplify the living of those great thoughts, noble emotions and aspiring ideals. This is a kind of good company, *satsaṅga*, which can seldom fail to have effect so long as sententious sermonising is avoided, and becomes of the highest effect if the personal life of the teacher is itself moulded by the great things he places before his pupils. It cannot, however, have full force unless the young life is given an opportunity, within its limited sphere, of embodying in action the moral impulses which rise within it. The thirst of knowledge, the self-devotion, the purity, the renunciation of the Brahmin,—the courage, ardour, honour, nobility, chivalry, patriotism of the Kshatriya,—the beneficence, skill, industry, generous enterprise and large open-handedness of the Vaisya,—the self-effacement and loving service of the Sudra,—these are the qualities of the Aryan. They constitute the moral temper we desire in our young men, in the whole nation. But how can we get them if we do not give opportunities to the young to train themselves in the Aryan tradition, to form by the practice and familiarity of childhood and boyhood the stuff of which their adult lives must be made?

Every boy should, therefore, be given practical opportunity as well as intellectual encouragement to develop all that is best in the nature. If he has bad qualities, bad habits, bad *saṁskāras*, whether of mind or body, he should not be treated harshly as a delinquent, but encouraged to get rid of them by the Rajayogic method of *saṁyama*, rejection and substitution. He should be encouraged to think of them,

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not as sins or offences, but as symptoms of a curable disease alterable by a steady and sustained effort of the will,—falsehood being rejected whenever it rises into the mind and replaced by truth, fear by courage, selfishness by sacrifice and renunciation, malice by love. Great care will have to be taken that unformed virtues are not rejected as faults. Wildness and recklessness of many young natures are only the overflowings of an excessive strength, greatness and nobility. They should be purified, not discouraged.

I have spoken of morality; it is necessary to speak a word of religious teaching. There is a strange idea prevalent that by merely teaching the dogmas of religion children can be made pious and moral. This is an European error, and its practice either leads to mechanical acceptance of a creed having no effect on the inner and little on the outer life, or it creates the fanatic, the pietist, the ritualist or the unctuous hypocrite. Religion has to be lived, not learned as a creed. The singular compromise made in the so-called National Education of Bengal making the teaching of religious beliefs compulsory, but forbidding the practice of *anuṣṭhāna* or religious exercise, is a sample of the ignorant confusion which distracts men's minds on this subject. The prohibition is a sop to secularism declared or concealed. No religious teaching is of any value unless it is lived, and the use of various kinds of *sādhana*, spiritual self-training and exercise is the only effective preparation for religious living. The ritual of prayer, homage, ceremony is craved for by many minds as an essential preparation and, if not made an end in itself, is a great help to spiritual progress; if it is withheld, some other form of meditation, devotion or religious duty must be put in its place. Otherwise, religious teaching is of little use and would almost be better ungiven.

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But whether distinct teaching in any form of religion is imparted or not, the essence of religion, to live for God, for humanity, for country, for others and for oneself in these, must be made the ideal in every school which calls itself national. It is this spirit of Hinduism pervading our schools which—far more than the teaching of Indian subjects, the use of Indian methods or formal instruction in Hindu beliefs and Hindu scriptures—should be the essence of Nationalism in our schools distinguishing them from all others.

(4)

SIMULTANEOUS AND SUCCESSIVE TEACHING

A VERY remarkable feature of modern training which has been subjected in India to a *reductio ad absurdum* is the practice of teaching by snippets. A subject is taught a little at a time, in conjunction with a host of others, with the result that what might be well learnt in a single year is badly learned in seven and the boy goes out ill-equipped, served with imperfect parcels of knowledge, master of none of the great departments of human knowledge. The system of education adopted by the National Council, an amphibious and twy-natured creation, attempts to heighten this practice of teaching by snippets at the bottom and the middle and suddenly change it to a grandiose specialism at the top. This is to base the triangle on its apex and hope that it will stand.

The old system was to teach one or two subjects well and

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thoroughly and then proceed to others, and certainly it was a more rational system than the modern. If it did not impart so much varied information, it built up a deeper, nobler and more real culture. Much of the shallowness, discursive lightness and fickle mutability of the average modern mind is due to the vicious principle of teaching by snippets. The one defect that can be alleged against the old system was that the subject earliest learned might fade from the mind of the student while he was mastering his later studies. But the excellent training given to the memory by the ancients obviated the incidence of this defect. In the future education we need not bind ourselves either by the ancient or the modern system, but select only the most perfect and rapid means of mastering knowledge.

In defence of the modern system it is alleged that the attention of children is easily tired and cannot be subjected to the strain of long application to a single subject. The frequent change of subject gives rest to the mind. The question naturally arises: are the children of modern times then so different from the ancients, and, if so, have we not made them so by discouraging prolonged concentration? A very young child cannot, indeed, apply himself; but a very young child is unfit for school teaching of any kind. A child of seven or eight, and that is the earliest permissible age for the commencement of any regular kind of study, is capable of a good deal of concentration if he is interested. Interest is, after all, the basis of concentration. We make his lessons supremely uninteresting and repellent to the child, a harsh compulsion the basis of teaching and then complain of his restless inattention! The substitution of a natural self-education by the child for the present unnatural system will remove this objection of inability. A

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child, like a man, if he is interested, much prefers to get to the end of his subject rather than leave it unfinished. To lead him on step by step, interesting and absorbing him in each as it comes, until he has mastered his subject is the true art of teaching.

The first attention of the teacher must be given to the medium and the instruments, and, until these are perfected, to multiply subjects of regular instruction is to waste time and energy. When the mental instruments are sufficiently developed to acquire a language easily and swiftly, that is the time to introduce him to many languages, not when he can only partially understand what he is taught and masters it laboriously and imperfectly. Moreover, one who has mastered his own language, has one very necessary facility for mastering another. With the linguistic faculty unsatisfactorily developed in one's own tongue, to master others is impossible. To study science with the faculties of observation, judgment, reasoning and comparison only slightly developed is to undertake a useless and thankless labour. So it is with all other subjects.

The mother-tongue is the proper medium of education and therefore the first energies of the child should be directed to the thorough mastering of the medium. Almost every child has an imagination, an instinct for words, a dramatic faculty, a wealth of idea and fancy. These should be interested in the literature and history of the nation. Instead of stupid and dry spelling and reading books, looked on as a dreary and ungrateful task, he should be introduced by rapidly progressive stages to the most interesting parts of his own literature and the life around him and behind him, and they should be put before him in such a way as to attract and appeal to the qualities of which I have spoken.

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All other study at this period should be devoted to the perfection of the mental functions and the moral character. A foundation should be laid at this time for the study of history, science, philosophy, art, but not in an obtrusive and formal manner. Every child is a lover of interesting narrative, a hero-worshipper and a patriot. Appeal to these qualities in him and through them let him master without knowing it the living and human parts of his nation's history. Every child is an inquirer, an investigator, analyser, a merciless anatomist. Appeal to those qualities in him and let him acquire without knowing it the right temper and the necessary fundamental knowledge of the scientist. Every child has an insatiable intellectual curiosity and turn for metaphysical enquiry. Use it to draw him on slowly to an understanding of the world and himself. Every child has the gift of imitation and a touch of imaginative power. Use it to give him the groundwork of the faculty of the artist.

It is by allowing Nature to work that we get the benefit of the gifts she has bestowed on us. Humanity in its education of children has chosen to thwart and hamper her processes and, by so doing, has done much to thwart and hamper the rapidity of its onward march. Happily, saner ideas are now beginning to prevail. But the way has not yet been found. The past hangs about our necks with all its prejudices and errors and will not leave us; it enters into our most radical attempts to return to the guidance of the all-wise Mother. We must have the courage to take up clearer knowledge and apply it fearlessly in the interests of posterity. Teaching by snippets must be relegated to the lumber-room of dead sorrows. The first work is to interest the child in life, work and knowledge, to develop his instruments of knowledge with the utmost thoroughness, to give

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him mastery of the medium he must use. Afterwards, the rapidity with which he will learn will make up for any delay in taking up regular studies, and it will be found that, where now he learns a few things badly, then he will learn many things thoroughly well.

(5)

THE TRAINING OF THE SENSES

THERE are six senses which minister to knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, mind, and all of these except the last look outward and gather the material of thought from outside through the physical nerves and their end-organs, eye, ear, nose, skin, palate. The perfection of the senses as ministers to thought must be one of the first cares of the teacher. The two things that are needed of the senses are accuracy and sensitiveness. We must first understand what are the obstacles to the accuracy and sensitiveness of the senses, in order that we may take the best steps to remove them. The cause of imperfection must be understood by those who desire to bring about perfection.

The senses depend for their accuracy and sensitiveness on the unobstructed activity of the nerves which are the channels of their information and the passive acceptance of the mind which is the recipient. In themselves the organs do their work perfectly. The eye gives the right form, the ear the correct sound, the palate the right taste, the skin the right touch, the nose the right smell. This can easily be understood if we study the action of the eye as a

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crucial example. A correct image is reproduced automatically on the retina, if there is any error in appreciating it, it is not the fault of the organ, but of something else.

The fault may be with the nerve currents. The nerves are nothing but channels, they have no power in themselves to alter the information given by the organs. But a channel may be obstructed and the obstruction may interfere either with the fullness or the accuracy of the information, not as it reaches the organ where it is necessarily and automatically perfect, but as it reaches the mind. The only exception is in case of a physical defect in the organ as an instrument. That is not a matter for the educationist, but for the physician.

If the obstruction is such as to stop the information reaching the mind at all, the result is an insufficient sensitiveness of the senses. The defects of sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste, anaesthesia in its various degrees, are curable when not the effect of physical injury or defect in the organ itself. The obstruction can be removed and the sensitiveness remedied by the purification of the nerve system. The remedy is a simple one which is now becoming more and more popular in Europe for different reasons and objects, the regulation of the breathing. This process inevitably restores the perfect and unobstructed activity of the channels and, if well and thoroughly done, leads to a high activity of the senses. The process is called in Yogic discipline *nāḍi-śuddhi* or nerve-purification.

The obstruction in the channel may be such as not absolutely to stop in however small a degree, but to distort the information. A familiar instance of this is the effect of fear or alarm on the sense action. The startled horse takes the sack on the road for a dangerous living thing, the startled

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man takes a rope for a snake, a waving curtain for a ghostly form. All distortions due to actions in the nervous system can be traced to some kind of emotional disturbance acting in the nerve channels. The only remedy for them is the habit of calm, the habitual steadiness of the nerves. This also can be brought about by *nāḍi-śuddhi* or nerve-purification, which quiets the system, gives a deliberate calmness to all the internal processes and prepares the purification of the mind.

If the nerve channels are quiet and clear, the only possible disturbance of the information is from or through the mind. Now the *manas* or sixth sense is in itself a channel like the nerves, a channel for communication with the *buddhi* or brain-force. Disturbance may happen either from above or from below. The information outside is first photographed on the end organ, then reproduced at the other end of the nerve system in the *citta* or passive memory. All the images of sight, sound, smell, touch and taste are deposited there and the *manas* reports them to the *buddhi*. The *manas* is both a sense organ and a channel. As a sense organ it is as automatically perfect as the others, as a channel it is subject to disturbance resulting either in obstruction or distortion.

As a sense organ the mind receives direct thought impressions from outside and from within. These impressions are in themselves perfectly correct, but in their report to the intellect they may either not reach the intellect at all or may reach it so distorted as to make a false or partially false impression. The disturbance may affect the impression which attends the information of eye, ear, nose, skin or palate, but it is very slightly powerful here. In its effect on the direct impressions of the mind, it is extremely powerful and the chief source of error. The mind takes

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direct impressions primarily of thought, but also of form, sound, indeed of all the things for which it usually prefers to depend on the sense organs. The full development of this sensitiveness of the mind is called in our Yogic discipline *sūkṣmadṛṣṭi* or subtle reception of images. Telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, presentiment, thought-reading, character-reading and many other modern discoveries are very ancient powers of the mind which have been left undeveloped, and they all belong to the *manas*. The development of the sixth sense has never formed part of human training. In a future age it will undoubtedly take a place in the necessary preliminary training of the human instrument. Meanwhile there is no reason why the mind should not be trained to give a correct report to the intellect so that our thought may start with absolutely correct if not with full impressions.

The first obstacle, the nervous emotional, we may suppose to be removed by the purification of the nervous system. The second obstacle is that of the emotions themselves warping the impression as it comes. Love may do this, hatred may do this, any emotion or desire according to its power and intensity may distort the impression as it travels. This difficulty can only be removed by the discipline of the emotions, the purifying of the moral habits. This is a part of moral training and its consideration may be postponed for the moment. The next difficulty is the interference of previous associations formed or ingrained in the *citta* or passive memory. We have a habitual way of looking at things and the conservative inertia in our nature disposes us to give every new experience the shape and semblance of those to which we are accustomed. It is only more developed minds which can receive first impressions without an

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unconscious bias against the novelty of novel experience. For instance, if we get a true impression of what is happening—and we habitually act on such impressions true or false—if it differs from what we are accustomed to expect, the old association meets it in the *citta* and sends a changed report to the intellect in which either the new impression is overlaid and concealed by the old or mingled with it. To go farther into this subject would be to involve ourselves too deeply into the details of psychology. This typical instance will suffice. To get rid of this obstacle is impossible without *citta-śuddhi* or purification of the mental and moral habits formed in the *citta*. This is a preliminary process of Yoga and was effected in our ancient system by various means, but would be considered out of place in a modern system of education.

It is clear, therefore, that unless we revert to our old Indian system in some of its principles, we must be content to allow this source of disturbance to remain. A really national system of education would not allow itself to be controlled by European ideas in this all-important matter. And there is a process so simple and momentous that it can easily be made a part of our system.

It consists in bringing about passivity of the restless flood of thought sensations rising of its own momentum from the passive memory independent of our will and control. This passivity liberates the intellect from the siege of old associations and false impressions. It gives it power to select only what is wanted from the storehouse of the passive memory, automatically brings about the habit of getting right impressions and enables the intellect to dictate to the *citta* what *saṁskāras* or associations shall be formed or rejected. This is the real office of the intellect,—to discriminate,

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choose, select, arrange. But so long as there is not *citta-śuddhi*, instead of doing this office perfectly, it itself remains imperfect and corrupt and adds to the confusion in the mind channel by false judgment, false imagination, false memory, false observation, false comparison, contrast and analogy, false deduction, induction and inference. The purification of the *citta* is essential for the liberation, purification and perfect action of the intellect.

(6)

SENSE-IMPROVEMENT BY PRACTICE

ANOTHER cause of the inefficiency of the senses as gatherers of knowledge, is insufficient use. We do not observe sufficiently or with sufficient attention and closeness and a sight, sound, smell, even touch or taste knocks in vain at the door for admission. This *tāmasic* inertia of the receiving instruments is no doubt due to the inattention of the *buddhi*, and therefore its consideration may seem to come properly under the training of the functions of the intellect, but it is more convenient, though less psychologically correct, to notice it here. The student ought to be accustomed to catch the sights, sounds, etc., around him, distinguish them, mark their nature, properties and sources and fix them in the *citta* so that they may be always ready to respond when called for by the memory.

It is a fact which has been proved by minute experiments that the faculty of observation is very imperfectly developed in men, merely from want of care in the use of the sense and the memory. Give twelve men the task of record-

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ing from memory something they all saw two hours ago and the accounts will all vary from each other and from the actual occurrence. To get rid of this imperfection will go a long way towards the removal of error. It can be done by training the senses to do their work perfectly, which they will do readily enough if they know the *buddhi* requires it of them, and giving sufficient attention to put the facts in their right place and order in the memory.

Attention is a factor in knowledge, the importance of which has been always recognised. Attention is the first condition of right memory and of accuracy. To attend to what he is doing is the first element of discipline required of the student, and, as I have suggested, this can easily be secured if the object of attention is made interesting. This attention to a single thing is called concentration. One truth is, however, sometimes overlooked; that concentration on several things at a time is often indispensable. When people talk of concentration, they imply centring the mind on one thing at a time; but it is quite possible to develop the power of double concentration, triple concentration, multiple concentration. When a given incident is happening, it may be made up of several simultaneous happenings or a set of simultaneous circumstances, a sight, a sound, a touch or several sights, sounds, touches occurring at the same moment or in the same short space of time. The tendency of the mind is to fasten on one and mark others vaguely, many not at all or, if compelled to attend to all, to be distracted and mark none perfectly. Yet this can be remedied and the attention equally distributed over a set of circumstances in such a way as to observe and remember each perfectly. It is merely a matter of *abhyāsa* or steady natural practice.

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It is also very desirable that the hand should be capable of coming to the help of the eye in dealing with the multitudinous objects of its activity so as to ensure accuracy. This is of a use so obvious and imperatively needed, that it need not be dwelt on at length. The practice of imitation by the hand of the thing seen is of use both in detecting the lapses and inaccuracies of the mind, in noticing the objects of sense and in registering accurately what has been seen. Imitation by the hand ensures accuracy of observation. This is one of the first uses of drawing and it is sufficient in itself to make the teaching of this subject a necessary part of the training of the organs.

(7)

THE TRAINING OF THE MENTAL FACULTIES

THE first qualities of the mind that have to be developed are those which can be grouped under observation. We notice some things, ignore others. Even of what we notice, we observe very little. A general perception of an object is what we all usually carry away from a cursory half-attentive glance. A closer attention fixes its place, form, nature as distinct from its surroundings. Full concentration of the faculty of observation gives us all the knowledge that the three chief senses can gather about the object, or if we touch or taste, we may gather all that the five senses can tell of its nature and properties. Those who make use of the sixth sense, the poet, the painter, the Yogin, can also gather much that is hidden from the ordinary observer. The

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scientist by investigation ascertains other facts open to a minuter observation. These are the components of the faculty of observation, and it is obvious that its basis is attention, which may be only close or close and minute. We may gather much even from a passing glance at an object, if we have the habit of concentrating the attention and the habit of *sāttvic* receptivity. The first thing the teacher has to do is to accustom the pupil to concentrate attention.

We may take the instance of a flower. Instead of looking casually at it and getting a casual impression of scent, form and colour, he should be encouraged to know the flower—to fix in his mind the exact shade, the peculiar glow, the precise intensity of the scent, the beauty of curve and design in the form. His touch should assure itself of the texture and its peculiarities. Next, the flower should be taken to pieces and its structure examined with the same carefulness of observation. All this should be done not as a task, but as an object of interest by skilfully arranged questions suited to the learner which will draw him on to observe and investigate one thing after the other until he has almost unconsciously mastered the whole.

Memory and judgment are the next qualities that will be called upon, and they should be encouraged in the same unconscious way. The student should not be made to repeat the same lesson over again in order to remember it. That is a mechanical, burdensome and unintelligent way of training the memory. A similar but different flower should be put in the hands and he should be encouraged to note it with the same care, but with the avowed object of noting the similarities and differences. By this practice daily repeated the memory will naturally be trained. Not only so, but the

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mental centres of comparison and contrast will be developed. The learner will begin to observe as a habit the similarities of things and their differences. The teacher should take every care to encourage the perfect growth of this faculty and habit. At the same time, the laws of species and genus will begin to dawn on the mind and, by a skilful following and leading of the young developing mind, the scientific habit, the scientific attitude and the fundamental facts of scientific knowledge may in a very short time be made part of its permanent equipment. The observation and comparison of flowers, leaves, plants, trees will lay the foundations of botanical knowledge without loading the mind with names and that dry set acquisition of informations which is the beginning of cramming and detested by the healthy human mind when it is fresh from nature and unspoiled by unnatural habits. In the same way by the observation of the stars, astronomy, by the observation of earth, stones, etc., geology, by the observation of insects and animals, entomology and zoology may be founded. A little later chemistry may be started by interesting observation of experiments without any formal teaching or heaping on the mind of formulas and book knowledge. There is no scientific subject the perfect and natural mastery of which cannot be prepared in early childhood by this training of the faculties to observe, compare, remember and judge various classes of objects. It can be done easily and attended with a supreme and absorbing interest in the mind of the student. Once the taste is created, the boy can be trusted to follow it up with all the enthusiasm of youth in his leisure hours. This will prevent the necessity at a later age of teaching him everything in class.

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The judgment will naturally be trained along with the other faculties. At every step the boy will have to decide what is the right idea, measurement, appreciation of colour, sound, scent, etc., and what is the wrong. Often the judgments and distinctions made will have to be exceedingly subtle and delicate. At first many errors will be made, but the learner should be taught to trust his judgment without being attached to its results. It will be found that the judgment will soon begin to respond to the calls made on it, clear itself of all errors and begin to judge correctly and minutely. The best way is to accustom the boy to compare his judgments with those of others. When he is wrong, it should at first be pointed out to him how far he was right and why he went wrong; afterwards he should be encouraged to note these things for himself. Every time he is right, his attention should be prominently and encouragingly called to it so that he may get confidence.

While engaged in comparing and contrasting, another centre is certain to develop, the centre of analogy. The learner will inevitably draw analogies and argue from like to like. He should be encouraged to use this faculty while noticing its limitations and errors. In this way he will be trained to form the habit of correct analogy which is an indispensable aid in the acquisition of knowledge.

The one faculty we have omitted, apart from the faculty of direct reasoning, is Imagination. This is a most important and indispensable instrument. It may be divided into three functions, the forming of mental images, the power of creating thoughts, images and imitations or new combinations of existing thoughts and images, the appreciation of the soul in things, beauty, charm, greatness, hidden suggestiveness, the emotion and spiritual life that pervades the world.

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This is in every way as important as the training of the faculties which observe and compare outward things. But that demands a separate and fuller treatment.

The mental faculties should first be exercised on things, afterwards on words and ideas. Our dealings with language are much too perfunctory and the absence of a fine sense for words impoverishes the intellect and limits the fineness and truth of its operation. The mind should be accustomed first to notice the word thoroughly, its form, sound and sense; then to compare the form with other similar forms in the points of similarity and difference, thus forming the foundation of the grammatical sense; then to distinguish between the fine shades of sense of similar words and the formation and rhythm of different sentences, thus forming the formation of the literary and the syntactical faculties. All this should be done informally, drawing on the curiosity and interest, avoiding set teaching and memorising of rules. The true knowledge takes its base on things, *arthas*, and only when it has mastered the thing, proceeds to formalise its information.

(8)

THE TRAINING OF THE LOGICAL FACULTY

THE training of the logical reason must necessarily follow the training of the faculties which collect the material on which the logical reason must work. Not only so but the mind must have some development of the faculty of dealing with words before it can deal successfully with ideas. The question is, once this preliminary work is done, what is

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the best way of teaching the boy to think correctly from premises. For the logical reason cannot proceed without premises. It either infers from facts to a conclusion, or from previously formed conclusions to a fresh one, or from one fact to another. It either induces, deduces or simply infers. I see the sunrise day after day, I conclude or induce that it rises as a law daily after a varying interval of darkness. I have already ascertained that wherever there is smoke, there is fire. I have induced that general rule from an observation of facts. I deduce that in a particular case of smoke there is a fire behind. I infer that a man must have lit it from the improbability of any other cause under the particular circumstances. I cannot deduce it because fire is not always created by human kindling; it may be volcanic or caused by a stroke of lightning or the sparks from some kind of friction in the neighbourhood.

There are three elements necessary to correct reasoning: first, the correctness of the facts or conclusions I start from, secondly, the completeness as well as the accuracy of the data I start from, thirdly, the elimination of other possible or impossible conclusions from the same facts. The fallibility of the logical reason is due partly to avoidable negligence and looseness in securing these conditions, partly to the difficulty of getting all the facts correct, still more to the difficulty of getting all the facts complete, most of all, to the extreme difficulty of eliminating all possible conclusions except the one which happens to be right. No fact is supposed to be more perfectly established than the universality of the Law of Gravitation as an imperative rule, yet a single new fact inconsistent with it would upset this supposed universality. And such facts exist. Nevertheless by care and keenness the fallibility may be reduced to its minimum.

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The usual practice is to train the logical reason by teaching the science of Logic. This is an instance of the prevalent error by which book knowledge of a thing is made the object of the study instead of the thing itself. The experience of reasoning and its errors should be given to the mind and it should be taught to observe how these work for itself; it should proceed from the example to the rule and from the accumulating harmony of rules to the formal science of the subject, not from the formal science to the rule, and from the rule to the example.

The first step is to make the young mind interest itself in drawing inferences from the facts, tracing cause and effect. It should then be led on to notice its successes and its failures and the reason of the success and of the failure; the incorrectness of the fact started from, the haste in drawing conclusions from insufficient facts, the carelessness in accepting a conclusion which is improbable, little supported by the data or open to doubt, the indolence or prejudice which does not wish to consider other possible explanations or conclusions. In this way the mind can be trained to reason as correctly as the fallibility of human logic will allow, minimising the chances of error. The study of formal logic should be postponed to a later time when it can easily be mastered in a very brief period, since it will be only the systematising of an art perfectly well-known to the student.

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IV. BRAIN OF INDIA

(1)

THE time has perhaps come for the Indian mind, long pre-occupied with political and economic issues for a widening of its horizon. Such a widening is especially necessary for Bengal.

The Bengali has always led and still leads the higher thought of India, because he has eminently the gifts which are most needed for the new race that has to arise. He has the emotion and imagination which is open to the great inspirations, the mighty heart-stirring ideas that move humanity when a great step forward has to be taken. He has the invaluable gift of thinking with the heart. He has, too, a subtle brain which is able within certain limits to catch shades of meaning and delicacies of thought, both those the logic grasps and those which escape the mere logical intellect. Above all, he has in a greater degree than other races the yet undeveloped faculty of direct knowledge, latent in humanity and now to be evolved, which is above reason and imagination, the faculty which in Sri Ramakrishna, the supreme outcome of the race, dispensed with education and commanded any knowledge he desired easily and divinely. It is a faculty which now works irregularly in humanity, unrecognised and confused by the interference of the imagination, of the limited reason and of the old associations or *saṁskāras* stored in the memory of the race and the individual. It cannot be made a recognised and habitual agent except by the discipline which the

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ancient Indian sages formulated in the science of Yoga. But certain races have the function more evolved or more ready for evolution than the generality of mankind, and it is these that will lead in the future evolution. In addition, the race has a mighty will-power which comes from the long worship of Shakti and practice of the Tantra that has been a part of our culture for many centuries. No other people could have revolutionised its whole national character in a few years as Bengal has done. The Bengali has always worshipped the Divine Energy in her most terrible as well as in her most beautiful aspects; whether as the Beautiful or the Terrible Mother he has never shrunk from her whether in fear or in awe. When the divine force flowed into him he has never feared to yield himself up to it and follow the infinite prompting, careless whither it led. As a reward he has become the most perfect *ādhāra* of Shakti, the most capable and swiftly sensitive and responsive receptacle of the Infinite Will and Energy the world now holds. Recently that Will and Energy has rushed into him and has been lifting him to the level of his future mission and destiny. He has now to learn the secret of drawing the Mother of Strength into himself and holding her there in a secure possession. That is why we have pointed to a religious and a spiritual awakening as the next necessity and the next inevitable development.

But along with his great possessions the Bengali has serious deficiencies. In common with the rest of India he has a great deficiency of knowledge, the result of an education meagre in quantity and absolutely vicious in method and quality. And he is inferior to other Indian races, such as the Madrasi and Maratha, in the capacity of calm, measured and comprehensive deliberation which is usually

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called intellect or reasoning power, and which, though it is far from the whole of thought, is essential to the completeness of thought and action. By itself the logical or reasoning intellect creates the accurate and careful scholar, the sober critic, the rationalist and cautious politician, the conservative scientist, the great mass of human intelligence which makes for slow and careful progress. It does not create the hero and the originator, the inspired prophet, the mighty builder, the maker of nations; it does not conquer nature and destiny, lay its hand on the future, command the world. The rest of India is largely dominated by this faculty and limited by it, therefore it lags behind while Bengal rushes forward. The rest of India has feared to deliver itself to the Power that came down from above to uplift the nation; it has either denied its call or made reservations and insisted on guiding it and reining it in. A few mighty men have stridden forward and carried their race or a part of it with them, but the whole race must be infused with the spirit before it can be fit for the work of the future.

On his side the Bengali, while in no way limiting the divine inrush or shortening the Titan stride, must learn to see the way he is going while he treads it. For want of a trained thought-power, he follows indeed the ideas that seize him, but he does not make them thoroughly his own. He thinks them out, if at all, rapidly but not comprehensively, and, in consequence, though he has applied them with great energy to the circumstances immediately around him, a new set of circumstances finds him perplexed and waiting for a lead from the few men to whom he has been accustomed to look for the source of his thought and action. This is a source of weakness. For the work of the present,

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and still more, for the work of the future, it is imperatively necessary to create a centre of thought and knowledge which will revolutionise the brain of the nation to as great an extent as its character and outlook has been revolutionised. A new heart was necessary for our civilisation, and, though the renovation is not complete, the work that has been done in that direction will ensure its own fulfilment. A new brain is also needed, and sufficiency of knowledge for the new brain to do its work with thoroughness.

(2)

A NEW centre of thought implies a new centre of education. The system prevailing in our universities is one which ignores the psychology of man, loads the mind laboriously with numerous little packets of information carefully tied with red tape, and, by the methods used in this loading process, damages or atrophies the faculties and instruments by which man assimilates, creates, and grows in intellect, manhood and energy. The new National Education, as inaugurated in Bengal, sought immensely to enlarge the field of knowledge to which the student was introduced, and in so far as it laid stress on experiment and observation, employed the natural and easy instrument of the vernacular and encouraged the play of thought on the subject of study, corrected the habit of spoiling the instruments of knowledge by the use of false methods. But many of the vicious methods and ideas employed by the old system were faithfully cherished by the new, and the domination of the Council by men wedded to the old lines was bound to spell a most unfavourable effect on the integrity of the

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system in its most progressive features. Another vital defect of the new education was that it increased the amount of information the student was required to absorb without strengthening the body and brain sufficiently to grapple with the increased mass of intellectual toil, and it shared with the old system the defect of ignoring the psychology of the race. The mere inclusion of the matter of Indian thought and culture in the field of knowledge does not make a system of education Indian, and the instruction given in the Bengal National College was only an improved European system, not Indian or National. Another error which has to be avoided and to which careless minds are liable, is the reactionary idea that in order to be national, education must reproduce the features of the old *tol* system of Bengal. It is not eighteenth century India, the India which by its moral and intellectual deficiencies gave itself into the keeping of foreigners, that we have to revive, but the spirit, ideals and methods of the ancient and mightier India in a yet more effective form and with a more modern organisation.

What was the secret of that gigantic intellectuality, spirituality and superhuman moral force which we see pulsating in the Ramayana and Mahabharata, in the ancient philosophy, in the supreme poetry, art, sculpture and architecture of India? What was at the basis of the incomparable public works and engineering achievement, the opulent and exquisite industries, the great triumphs of science, scholarship, jurisprudence, logic, metaphysics, the unique social structure? What supported the heroism and self-abandonment of the Kshattriya, the Sikh and the Rajput, the unconquerable national vitality and endurance? What was it that stood behind that civilisation second to none,

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in the massiveness of its outlines or the perfection of its details? Without a great and unique discipline involving a perfect education of soul and mind, a result so immense and persistent would have been impossible. It would be an error to look for the secret of Aryan success in the details of the instruction given in the old Ashrams and universities so far as they have come down to us. We must know what was the principle and basis on which the details were founded. We shall find the secret of their success in a profound knowledge of human psychology and its subtle application to the methods of intellectual training and instruction.

At the basis of the old Aryan system was the all-important discipline of Brahmacharya. The first necessity for the building up of a great intellectual superstructure is to provide a foundation strong enough to bear it. Those systems of education which start from an insufficient knowledge of man, think they have provided a satisfactory foundation when they have supplied the student with a large or well-selected mass of information on the various subjects which comprise the best part of human culture at the time. The school gives the materials, it is for the student to use them,—this is the formula. But the error here is fundamental. Information cannot be the foundation of intelligence, it can only be part of the material out of which the knower builds knowledge, the starting-point, the nucleus of fresh discovery and enlarged creation. An education that confines itself to imparting knowledge, is no education. The various faculties of memory, judgment, imagination, perception, reasoning, which build the edifice of thought and knowledge for the knower, must not only be equipped with their fit and sufficient tools and materials, but trained to bring fresh mate-

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rials and use more skilfully those of which they are in possession. And the foundation of the structure they have to build, can only be the provision of a fund of force and energy sufficient to bear the demands of a continually growing activity of the memory, judgment and creative power. Where is that energy to be found?

The ancient Aryans knew that man was not separate from the universe, but only a homogeneous part of it, as a wave is part of the ocean. An infinite energy, Pakriti, Maya or Shakti, pervades the world, pours itself into every name and form, and the clod, the plant, the insect, the animal, the man are, in their phenomenal existence, merely more or less efficient *ādhāras* of this Energy. We are each of us a dynamo into which waves of that energy have been generated and stored, and are being perpetually conserved, used up and replenished. The same force which moves in the star and the planet, moves in us, and all our thought and action are merely its play and born of the complexity of its functionings. There are processes by which man can increase his capacity as an *ādhāra*. There are other processes by which he can clear of obstructions the channel of communication between himself and the universal energy and bring greater and greater stores of it pouring into his soul and brain and body. This continual improvement of the *ādhāra* and increase in quantity and complexity of action of the informing energy, is the whole aim of evolution. When that energy is the highest in kind and the fullest in amount of which the human *ādhāra* is capable, and the *ādhāra* itself is trained utterly to bear the inrush and play of the energy, then is a man *siddha*, the fulfilled or perfect man, his evolution is over and he has completed in the individual that utmost development which the mass of

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humanity is labouring towards through the ages.

If this theory be correct, the energy at the basis of the operation of intelligence must be in ourselves and it must be capable of greater expansion and richer use to an extent practically unlimited. And this also must be a sound principle, that the more we can increase and enrich the energy, the greater will be potentially the range, power and activity of the functions of our mind and the consequent vigour of our intellectuality and the greatness of our achievement. This was the first principle on which the ancient Aryans based their education and one of the chief processes which they used for the increased storage of energy, was the practice of Brahmacharya.

(3)

THE practice of Brahmacharya is the first and most necessary condition of increasing the force within and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor or mankind. All human energy has a physical basis. The mistake made by European materialism is to suppose the basis to be everything and confuse it with the source. The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual, but the basis, the foundation on which the life and energy stand and work, is physical. The ancient Hindus clearly recognised this distinction between *kāraṇa* and *pratiṣṭhā*, the north pole and the south pole of being. Earth or gross matter is the *pratiṣṭhā*, Brahman or spirit is the *kāraṇa*. To raise up the physical to the spiritual is Brahmacharya, for by the meeting of the two the energy which starts from one and produces the other is enhanced and fulfils itself.

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This is the metaphysical theory. The application depends on a right understanding of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle of energy. The fundamental physical unit is the *retas*, in which the *tejas*, the heat and light and electricity in a man, is involved and hidden. All energy is latent in the *retas*. This energy may be either expended physically or conserved. All passion, lust, desire wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought in the subtle form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity is of the mind and speech as well as of the body. On the other hand, all self-control conserves the energy in the *retas*, and conservation always brings with it increase. But the needs of the physical body are limited and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is *jala* or water, full of light and heat and electricity, in one word, of *tejas*. The excess of the *retas* turns first into heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, and it is for this reason that all forms of self-control and austerity are called *tapas* or *tapasyā* because they generate the heat, or stimulus which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it turns to *tejas* proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it turns to *vidyut* or electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action whether intellectual or physical. In the *vidyut* again is involved the *ojas*, or *prāṇaśakti*, the primal energy which proceeds from ether. The *retas* refining from *jala* to *tapas*, *tejas* and *vidyut* and from *vidyut* to *ojas*, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain-power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain

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and informs it with that primal energy which is the most refined form of matter and nearest to spirit. It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force or *virya*, by which a man attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, spiritual strength. It follows that the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas*, *tejas*, *vidyut* and *ojas*, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.

This view of the human soul was not the whole of the knowledge on which ancient Hinduism based its educational discipline. In addition it had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside. The constitution of man consists of three principles of nature *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, the comprehensive, active and passive elements of universal action, which, in one of their thousandfold aspects, manifest as knowledge, passion and ignorance. *Tamas* is a constitutional dullness or passivity which obscures the knowledge within and creates ignorance, mental inertia, slowness, forgetfulness, disinclination to study, inability to grasp and distinguish. *Rajas* is an undisciplined activity which obscures knowledge by passion, attachment, prejudgment, predilection and wrong ideas. *Sattva* is an illumination which reveals the hidden knowledge and brings it to the surface where the observation can grasp and the memory record it. This conception of the constitution of the knowing faculty made the removal of *tamas*, the disciplining of *rajas* and the awakening of *sattva* the main problem of the teacher. He had to train the student to be receptive of illumination from within. The disciplining of *rajas* was effected by a strict moral discipline which induced a calm, clear, receptive state of mind, free from intellectual self-will and

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pride and the obscuration of passion,—the famous discipline of the *brahmacārin* which was the foundation of Aryan culture and Aryan morale; and the interference of wrong ideas was sought to be removed by strict mental submission to the teacher during the receptive period, when the body of ascertained knowledge or right ideas already in man's possession was explained to him and committed to memory. The removal of *tamas* was effected by the discipline of moral purity, which awakened the energy of *tejas* and electricity in the system and by the power of *tapasyā* trained it to be a reservoir of mental force and clarity. The awakening of illumination was actively effected by the triple method of repetition, meditation and discussion. *Avṛtti* or repetition was meant to fill the recording part of the mind with the *śabda* or words, so that the *artha* or meaning might of itself rise from within: needless to say, a mechanical repetition was not likely to produce this effect. There must be that clear still receptivity and that waiting upon the word or thing with the contemplative part of the mind which is what the ancient Indians meant by *dhyāna* or meditation. All of us have felt, when studying a language, difficulties which seemed insoluble while grappling with a text suddenly melt away and a clear understanding arise without assistance from book or teacher after putting away the book from our mind for a brief period. Many of us have experienced also the strangeness of taking up a language or subject, after a brief discontinuance, to find that we understand it much better than when we took it up, know the meanings of words we had never met with before and can explain sentences which, before we discontinued the study, would have baffled our understanding. This is because the *jñātā* or knower within has had his attention called to the subject

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and has been busy in the interval drawing upon the source of knowledge within in connection with it. This experience is only possible to those whose *sāttvic* or illuminative element has been powerfully aroused or consciously or unconsciously trained to action by the habit of intellectual clarity and deep study. The highest reach of the *sāttvic* development is when one can dispense often or habitually with outside aids, the teacher or the text book, grammar and dictionary and learn a subject largely or wholly from within. But this is only possible to the Yogin by a successful prosecution of the discipline of Yoga.

(4)

We have stated, as succinctly as is consistent with clearness, the main psychological principles on which the ancient Indians based their scheme of education. By the training of Brahmacharya they placed all the energy of which the system was capable and which could be spared from bodily functions, at the service of the brain. In this way they not only strengthened the *medhā* or grasping power, the *dhī* or subtlety and swiftness of thought conception, the memory and the creative intellectual force, making the triple force of memory, invention, judgment comprehensive and analytic, but they greatly enlarged the range, no less than the intensity, of the absorbing, storing and generative mental activities. Hence those astonishing feats of memory, various comprehension and versatility of creative work of which only a few extraordinary intellects have been capable in Occidental history, but which in ancient India were common and usual. Mr. Gladstone was considered to be the possessor of an astonishing memory because he could repeat

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the whole of Homer's Iliad, beginning from any passage suggested to him and flowing on as long as required; but to a Brahmin of the old times this would have been a proof of a capacity neither unusual nor astonishing, but rather, petty and limited. The many-sidedness of an Eratosthenes or the range of a Herbert Spencer have created in Europe admiring or astonished comment; but the universality of the ordinary curriculum in ancient India was for every student and not for the exceptional few, and it implied, not a tasting of many subjects after the modern plan, but the thorough mastery of all. The original achievement of a Kalidasa accomplishing the highest in every line of poetic creation is so incredible to the European mind that it has been sought to cleave that mighty master of harmonies into a committee of three. Yet it is paralleled by the accomplishment in philosophy of Shankara in a short life of thirty-two years and dwarfed by the universal mastery of all possible spiritual knowledge and experience of Sri Ramakrishna in our own era. These instances are not so common as the others, because pure creative genius is not common; but in Europe they are, with a single modern exception, non-existent. The highest creative intellects in Europe have achieved sovereignty by limitation, by striving to excel only in one field of a single intellectual province or at most in two; when they have been versatile it has been by sacrificing height to breadth. But in India it is the greatest who have been the most versatile and passed from one field of achievement to another without sacrificing an inch of their height or an iota of their creative intensity, easily, unfalteringly, with an assured mastery. This easy and unfailing illumination crowning the unfailing energy created by Brahmacharya was due to the discipline which developed *sattva* or inner

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illumination. This illumination makes the acquisition of knowledge and all other intellectual operations easy, spontaneous, swift, decisive and comparatively unfatiguing to body or brain. In these two things lies the secret of Aryan intellectual achievement, Brahmacharya and *sāttvic* development created the brain of India: it was perfected by Yoga.

It is a common complaint that our students are too heavily burdened with many subjects and the studying of many books. The complaint is utterly true and yet it is equally true that the range of studies is pitifully narrow and the books read miserably few. What is the reason of this paradox, the justification of these two apparently contradictory truths? It is this, that we neglect the basis and proceed at once to a superstructure small in bulk, disproportionately heavy in comparison with that bulk, and built on a foundation too weak to bear even the paltry and meagre edifice of our imparted knowledge. The Indian brain is still in potentiality what it was; but it is being damaged, stunted and defaced. The greatness of its innate possibilities is hidden by the greatness of its surface deterioration. The old system hampered it with study in a foreign language which was not even imperfectly mastered at a time when the student was called upon to learn in that impossible medium a variety of alien and unfamiliar subjects. In this unnatural process it was crippled by the disuse of judgment, observation, comprehension and creation, and the exclusive reliance on the deteriorating relics of the ancient Indian memory. Finally, it was beggared and degraded by having to deal with snippets and insufficient packets of information instead of being richly stored and powerfully equipped.

The new system of National Education sought to undo the evil by employing the mother-tongue, restoring the

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use of the disused intellectual functions and providing for a richer and more real equipment of information, of the substance of knowledge and the materials for creation. If it could not triumphantly succeed, that was partly because it had to deal with minds already vitiated by the old system and not often with the best even of these, because its teachers had themselves seldom a perfect grasp of the requirements of the new system, and because its controllers and directors were men of the old school who clung to familiar shibboleths and disastrous delusions. But in the system itself there was a defect, which, though it would matter less in other epochs or other countries, is of primary importance in such periods of transition when bricks have to be made out of straw and the work now done will determine the future achievement of our nation. While calling itself national, it neglected the very foundation of the great achievement of our forefathers and especially the perfection of the instrument of knowledge.

It is not our contention that the actual system of ancient instruction should be restored in its outward features, —a demand often made by fervid lovers of the past. Many of them are not suited to modern requirements. But its fundamental principles are for all time and its discipline can only be replaced by the discovery of a still more effective discipline, such as European education does not offer us. The object of these articles has been to indicate the nature and psychological ideas of the old system and point out its essential relation of cause and effect to the splendid achievement of our ancestors. How its principles can be reapplied or be completed and to some extent replaced by a still deeper psychology and a still more effective discipline is a subject fit for separate treatment.

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V. EDUCATION

THE education of a human being should begin at his very birth and continue throughout the whole length of his life.

Indeed, if the education is to have its maximum result, it must begin even before birth: it is the mother herself who proceeds with this education by means of a twofold action, first, upon herself for her own improvement, and secondly, upon the child which she is forming within her physically. Certain it is that the nature of the child about to be born will depend very much upon the mother who forms it, upon her aspiration and will as much as upon the material surroundings in which she lives. The part of education which the mother has to go through is to see that her thoughts are always beautiful and pure, her feelings always noble and fine, her material surroundings as harmonious as possible and full of a great simplicity. And if in addition she has a conscious and definite will to form the child according to the highest ideal she can conceive, then the very best conditions are provided for the child to come into the world with the maximum of possibilities. How many difficult efforts and useless complications are avoided thereby!

Education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This, however, does not mean that one should

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replace another but that all must continue, completing each other, till the end of life.

We propose to study these five aspects of education one by one and also their reciprocal relations. But before we enter into the details of the subject, I wish to make a recommendation to parents. The majority of them, for various reasons, take very little thought of a true education to be given to children. When they have brought a child into the world, and when they have given him food and satisfied his various material wants by looking more or less to the maintenance of his health, they think they have fully discharged their duty. Later on, they would put him to school and hand over to the teacher the care of his mental education.

There are other parents who know that their children should receive education and try to give it. But very few among them, even among those who are most serious and sincere, know that the first thing to do, in order to be able to educate the child, is to educate oneself, to become conscious and master of oneself so that one does not set a bad example to one's child. For it is through example that education becomes effective. To say good words, give wise advice to a child has very little effect, if one does not show by one's living example the truth of what one teaches. Sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self-control are all things that are taught infinitely better by example than by beautiful speeches. Parents, you should have a high ideal and act always in accordance with that ideal. You will see little by little your child reflecting this ideal in himself and manifesting spontaneously the qualities you wish to see expressed in his

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nature. Quite naturally a child has respect and admiration for his parents; unless they are quite unworthy, they will appear always to their children as demigods whom they will seek to imitate as well as they can.

With very few exceptions, parents do not take into account the disastrous influence their defects, impulses, weaknesses, want of self-control have on their children. If you wish to be respected by your child, have respect for yourself and be at every moment worthy of respect. Never be arbitrary, despotic, impatient, ill-tempered. When your child asks you a question, do not answer him by a stupidity or a foolishness, under the pretext that he cannot understand you. You can always make yourself understood if you take sufficient pains for it, and in spite of the popular saying that it is not always good to tell the truth, I affirm that it is always good to tell the truth, only the art consists in telling it in such a way as to make it accessible to the brain of the hearer. In early life, till twelve to fourteen years, the child's mind is not accessible to abstract notions and general ideas. And yet you can train it to understand these things by using concrete images or symbols or parables. Up to a sufficiently advanced age and for some who mentally remain always children, a narrative, a story, a tale told well teaches much more than a heap of theoretical explanations.

Another stumbling-block to avoid. Do not scold your child except with a definite purpose and only when quite indispensable. A child too often scolded gets hardened to rebuke and comes to attach little importance to words or severity of tone. Particularly, take care not to rebuke him for a fault which you yourself commit. Children are very keen and clear-sighted observers: they soon find out your weaknesses and note them without pity.

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When a child has made a mistake, see that he confesses it to you spontaneously and frankly; and when he has confessed, make him understand with kindness and affection what was wrong in his movement and that he should not repeat it. In any case, never scold him; a fault confessed must be forgiven. You should not allow any fear to slip in between you and your child; fear is a disastrous way to education: invariably it gives birth to dissimulation and falsehood. An affection that sees clear, that is firm yet gentle and a sufficiently practical knowledge will create bonds of trust that are indispensable for you to make the education of your child effective. And never forget that you have to surmount yourself always and constantly so as to be at the height of your task and truly fulfil the duty which you owe towards your child by the mere fact of your having brought him into existence.

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VI. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

OF all the domains of human consciousness, the physical is the one most completely governed by method, order, discipline, procedure. The lack of plasticity and receptivity in matter has to be replaced there by an organisation of details, at once precise and comprehensive. In this organisation one must not forget, however, that all the domains of the being are interdependent and interpenetrating. Yet, even if a mental or vital impulsion is to be expressed physically it must submit to an exact and precise procedure. That is why all education of the body, if it is to be effective, must be rigorous and detailed, foreseeing and methodical. That will be translated into habits: the body is a being of habits. But these should be controlled and disciplined, yet at the same time supple enough to adapt themselves to the circumstances and the needs of the growth and development of the being.

All education of the body should begin at the very birth and continue throughout life: it is never too soon to begin nor too late to continue.

The education of the body has three principal aspects: (1) control and discipline of functions, (2) a total, methodical and harmonious development of all the parts and movements of the body and (3) rectification of defects and deformities if there are any.

It may be said that from the very first days, almost even from the first hours, of life the child should be submitted to the first part of the programme in the matter of food, sleep, evacuation etc. If the child, from the very

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beginning of his existence, takes to good habits, that will save him a good deal of trouble and inconvenience during the whole of his life. And also the persons who have the charge to watch over him during his first years will find their task very much easier.

Naturally, this education, if it is to be rational, enlightened and effective, must be based upon a minimum knowledge of the human body, its structure and its functions. As the child grows, he must gradually acquire the habit of observing the functioning of its organs so that he may control it more and more, taking care that this functioning is normal and harmonious. In the matter of positions, postures and movements, bad habits are formed too early and too quickly that may have disastrous consequences for the whole life. All who take the question of education seriously and wish to give their children all facilities to develop normally will easily find the necessary hints and instructions. The subject is being more and more carefully studied, and many books have appeared and are appearing which give all the information and guidance needed on the subject.

It is not possible for me to enter into the details of execution, for each problem is different from another and the solution should suit the individual case. The question of food has been studied by experts at length and with care. The dietary to help children in their growth is generally known and can be usefully followed. But it is very important to remember that the instinct of the body, so long as it remains intact, knows more than all theory. Thus, if you wish that your children should develop normally, you must not force them to eat food for which they have a disgust; for often the body possesses a sure instinct as to what is harmful

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to it, unless the child is particularly capricious.

The body in its normal state, that is to say, if there is no intervention of mental notions or vital impulsions, knows also very well what is good and necessary for it. But a normal state of that kind can happen only when the child has been taught with care and has learnt to distinguish desires from needs. He must develop the taste for food that is simple and healthy, substantial and appetising, without any useless complications. He must avoid, in his daily food, all that merely stuffs and causes heaviness; particularly, he must be taught to eat according to his hunger, neither more nor less, and not to make food an occasion to satisfy his greed and gluttony. From one's very childhood, one should know that one eats in order to give to the body strength and health, and not to enjoy the pleasures of the palate. The child should be given the food that suits his temperament, prepared with all safeguards in respect of hygiene and cleanliness, that is pleasant to the taste and yet very simple; and this food should be chosen and measured out according to the age of the child and his regular activities; it must contain all the chemical and dynamic elements that are necessary for the development and the balanced growth of all the parts of the body.

Since the child will be given only the food needed for maintaining health and supplying necessary energy, one must be very careful not to use food as a means of coercion or punishment. The habit of telling a child: "you were not a good boy, you will not be given your dessert etc." is totally disastrous. You create in this way in his little consciousness the impression that food is given to him chiefly to satisfy his greed and not because it is indispensable for the good functioning of his body.

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Another thing should be taught to a child from his early age; the taste for cleanliness and hygienic habits. But if you wish to form in the child this taste for cleanliness and respect for the rules of hygiene, you must take great care not to instil into him the fear of illness. Fear is the worst incentive for education and the surest way of attracting what is feared. Yet, while not fearing illness, one need have no inclination for it either. There is a current belief that brilliant minds have weak bodies. It is a delusion and has no basis. There was perhaps an epoch when a romantic and morbid taste for physical unbalance prevailed; but, fortunately, that tendency has disappeared. Nowadays a well-built, solid, muscular, strong and perfectly balanced body is appreciated at its true value. In any case, children should be taught to have respect for health, admiration for a healthy man whose body knows how to repel attacks of illness. A child pretends illness to escape a troublesome necessity, a work that does not interest him or even simply to move the heart of his parents and get from them satisfaction of some caprice. Children must also be taught, as early as possible that that procedure is not worth the game and that you are not more interesting by being ill; rather the contrary. The weak have a tendency to believe that their weaknesses make them particularly interesting and to use this weakness and even their illness, if necessary, as a means of attracting towards them the attention and sympathy of persons who are around them and live with them. On no account should this pernicious tendency be encouraged. Children should be taught that to be ill is a sign of failing and inferiority, not of a virtue or a sacrifice.

For that it would be good for the child, as soon as he is able to make use of his limbs, to devote some time daily

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to developing methodically and normally all the parts of his body. Every day some twenty or thirty minutes, preferably on getting up from bed if possible, will suffice to assure good functioning and balanced growth of his muscles, preventing at the same time stiffening of the joints and of the spine that comes about much earlier than it is supposed. In the general programme of education for children, sports and outdoor games should be given a fair place; that, more than all the medicines of the world, will assure him good health. An hour's moving about in the sun does more to cure weakness or anaemia than a whole armoury of tonics. My advice is that medicine should not be taken unless it is absolutely impossible to do otherwise; and this "absolutely impossible" must be absolutely strict. Although there are, in this programme of physical culture, certain well-known general lines as to how best to develop the human body, still if the method is to be fully effective, each case should be considered individually, if possible, with the help of a competent person, otherwise by consulting books on the subject that have already been or are being published.

But in any case, a child, whatever may be his activities, should have a sufficient number of hours for sleep. This number will vary with age. In the cradle, the baby should sleep longer than it remains awake. The number of hours for sleep will diminish as the child grows. But till the adult age the number should not be less than 8 hours and that in a quiet and well-ventilated place. The child should not be deprived of his early night sleep uselessly. The hours before midnight are the best for resting the nerves. Even during the waking hours, relaxation is an indispensable thing for everyone who wishes to maintain the nervous balance. To know how to relax the muscles and the nerves

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is an art which should be taught to the children even when very young. There are many parents who, on the contrary, force their children to constant activity. When the child remains quiet, they imagine he is ill. There are even parents who have the bad habit of making their child do household work at the expense of his rest and relaxation. Nothing is worse than that for a growing nervous system which cannot stand the tension of too continuous an effort or an activity imposed upon it and not freely chosen. I hold against all current ideas and prejudices that it is not fair to demand services from a child, as if it is his duty to serve his parents. The contrary would be more true: certainly it is natural that parents should serve their children, at least take great care of them. It is only if the child chooses freely to work for the family and does the work as a play that the thing is admissible. And even then, one must be careful that it diminishes in no way the hours of rest absolutely necessary for the body to function properly.

I said that even from young age children should be taught respect for physical health, strength and balance. The great importance of beauty must also be insisted upon. A young child should aspire for beauty, not for the sake of pleasing others or gaining fame, but for the love of beauty itself: for beauty is the ideal which physical life has to realise. In every human being there is the possibility of establishing harmony among the different parts of the body and the different movements when the body is in action. The human body that undergoes a rational method of physical culture from the beginning of its existence can realise its own harmony and thus be fit to express beauty. When we shall speak of the other aspects of an integral education, we shall see what are the inner conditions to

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be fulfilled if this beauty is to be manifested one day.

Till now I have referred only to the education to be given to children; for, a good deal of bodily defects and malformations can be avoided by an enlightened physical education given at the proper time. But if, for some reason or other, this education has not been given during childhood and even in youth, it can begin at any age and followed through out life. But the later one begins, the more one must be prepared to meet bad habits that have to be corrected, rigidities to be made supple, malformations to be rectified. And this preparatory work will need much patience and perseverance before one can start on a constructive programme for the harmonisation of the form and its movements. But if you hold within yourself the living ideal of beauty that is to be realised, you are sure to reach the goal you aim at.

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VII. THE EDUCATION OF THE VITAL

Of all education, the education of the vital is perhaps the most important and the most indispensable. And yet it is rarely taken up and followed with understanding and method. There are several reasons for this: first, human thinking is in a great confusion over what concerns this particular subject; secondly, the enterprise is very difficult and to be successful in it one must have endurance, endless persistence and an inflexible will.

Indeed, the vital in man's nature, is a despotic and exacting tyrant. Moreover, since it holds within itself power, energy, enthusiasm, effective dynamism, many have a feeling of timorous respect for it and try always to please it. But it is a master that is satisfied by nothing and its demands have no limit. Two ideas, very widespread, specially in the West, contribute towards making its domination ever more masterful. One is that the goal of life is to be happy; the other that you are born with a certain character and it is impossible to change it.

The first idea is a crude deformation of a very profound truth: it is that all existence is based upon the delight of being and without the delight of being there would be no life. But this delight of being, which is a quality of the Divine and therefore unconditional, must not be confused with the pursuit of pleasure in life, for that depends largely upon circumstances. The conviction that makes one believe that one has the right to be happy leads, as a matter of course, towards the will to live one's life at any cost. This attitude in its obscure and aggressive egoism brings

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about every conflict and misery, deception and discouragement, ending often in a catastrophe.

In the world, as it actually is, the goal of life is not to secure personal happiness, but to awaken the individual progressively towards the truth-consciousness.

The second idea arises from the fact that a fundamental change in character needs an almost complete mastery over the subconscient and a very rigorous disciplining of whatever comes up from the inconscient, which, in ordinary natures, is an expression of the consequences of atavism and of the environment in which one is born. Only an almost abnormal growth of consciousness and the constant help of Grace can achieve this herculean task. Besides, this task has been rarely attempted; many famous teachers have declared it unrealisable and chimerical. And yet it is not unrealisable. The transformation of character has been realised in fact by means of a clear-sighted discipline and a perseverance so obstinate that nothing, not even the most persistent failures, can discourage it.

The indispensable starting-point is a detailed and thorough observation of the character to be transformed. In most cases, that itself is a difficult and often baffling task. But there is one fact which the old traditions knew and which can serve as the guiding string in the labyrinth of inner discovery. It is that every one possesses in a large measure, and the exceptional individual in an increasing degree of precision, two opposite tendencies in the character, almost in equal proportion, which are like the light and the shadow of the same thing. Thus a man who has the capacity of being exceptionally generous suddenly finds rushing up in his nature an obstinate avarice: the courageous would be somewhere a coward and the good suddenly have wicked

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impulses. Life seems to endow every one, along with the possibility of expressing an ideal, with contrary elements in him representing in a concrete manner the battle he has to wage and the victory he has to win so that the realisation may be possible. In this way, all life is an education carried on more or less consciously, more or less deliberately. In certain cases this education helps the movements expressing the light, in others the opposite movements i.e., those that express the shadow. If the circumstances and the environment are favourable, the light will grow at the expense of the shadow; otherwise the contrary will happen. Hence the individual's character will crystallise according to the caprice of nature and the determinism of a material and vital life, unless there is a luminous intervention of a higher element, a conscious will which will not let nature follow its whimsical procedure but replace it by a logical and clear-seeing discipline. This conscious will is what we mean by the rational method of education.

That is why it is of prime importance that the child's education of the vital should begin as early as possible, indeed, as soon as he is able to use his sense organs. In that way, many bad habits would be avoided and harmful influences eliminated.

The education of the vital has two principal aspects. They are very different as to the goal and the process, but both are equally important. The first is to develop and utilise the sense organs, the second is to become conscious and gradually master of one's character and in the end to achieve its transformation.

The education of the senses, again, has several aspects: they are added to each other as the being grows: indeed this education should not stop at all. The sense organs may be

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so cultivated as to attain a precision and power in their functioning far greater than what is normally expected of them.

Some ancient mystic knowledge declared that the number of senses that man can develop is not five but seven and in certain special cases even twelve. Certain races at certain epochs have, through necessity, developed more or less perfectly one or the other of these supplementary senses. With a proper discipline persistently gone through, they are within the reach of all who are sincerely interested in their culture and its results. Among the many faculties that are often spoken of there is, for example, this one: to widen the physical consciousness, project it out of oneself so as to concentrate on a definite point and thus get the sight, hearing, smell, taste and even the touch at a distance.

To this general education of the senses and their action there will be added, as early as possible, the cultivation of discrimination and the aesthetic sense, the capacity to choose and take up what is beautiful and harmonious, simple, healthy and pure. For, there is a psychological health as much as a physical health; there is a beauty and harmony of the sensations, as much as a beauty of the body and its movements. As the child grows in capacity and understanding, he should be taught, in the course of his education, to add aesthetic taste and refinement to power and precision. He must be shown, made to appreciate, taught to love beautiful, lofty, healthy and noble things, whether in nature or in human creation. It must be a true aesthetic culture and it will save him from degrading influences. For in the wake of the last wars and the terrible nervous tension which they provoked, as a sign, perhaps, of the decline of civilisation and decomposition of society, has come a growing vulgarity which seems to have taken possession of human life,

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individually as well as collectively, particularly on the level of aesthetic life and the life of the senses. A methodical and enlightened culture of the senses can, little by little, remove from the child whatever has been vulgar, commonplace and crude in him through contagion: this culture will have happy reactions even on his character. For one who has developed a truly refined taste, will feel, because of this very refinement, incapable of acting in a crude, brutal or vulgar manner. This refinement, if it is sincere, will bring to the being a nobility and generosity which will spontaneously find expression in his behaviour and will keep him away from many base and perverse movements.

And this brings us naturally to the second aspect of vital education, i.e., what concerns character and its transformation.

Generally, systems of discipline dealing with the vital, its purification and its mastery proceed by coercion, suppression, abstinence and asceticism. The procedure is certainly easier and quicker although, in a deeper way, less enduring and effective than that of strict and detailed education. Besides, it eliminates all possibility of the intervention, help and collaboration of the vital. And yet this help is of the utmost importance if one wishes to have an all-round growth of the individual and his activity.

To become conscious of the many movements in oneself and take note of what one does and why one does it, is the indispensable starting-point. The child must be taught to observe himself, to note his reactions and impulses and their causes, to become a clear-sighted witness of his desires, his movements of violence and passion, his instincts of possession and appropriation and domination and the background of vanity against which they stand with their

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counterparts of weakness, discouragement, depression and despair.

Evidently, the process would be useful only when along with the growth of the power of observation there grows also the will towards progress and perfection. This will is to be instilled into the child as soon as he is capable of having one, that is to say, at a much younger age than is usually believed.

There are different methods according to differing cases for awakening this will to surmount and conquer: on certain individuals it is rational arguments that are effective, for others sentiment and good will are to be brought into play, in others again it is the sense of dignity and self-respect; for all, however, it is the example shown constantly and sincerely that is the most powerful means.

Once the resolution is firmly established, there is nothing more to do than to proceed with strictness and persistence, never to accept defeat as final. If you are to avoid all weakening and withdrawing, there is one important point you must know and never forget: the will can be cultivated and developed even like the muscles by methodical and progressive exercises. You must not shrink from demanding of your will the maximum effort even for a thing that appears to be of no importance; for it is by effort that capacity grows, acquiring little by little the power to apply itself even to the most difficult things. What you have decided to do, you must do, come what may, even if you have to begin your attempt over and over again any number of times. Your will will be strengthened by the effort, and in the end you will have nothing more to do than to choose with a clear vision the goal to which you will apply it.

To sum up: one must gain a full knowledge of one's

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character and then acquire control over one's movements so that one may achieve perfect mastery and transformation of all the elements that have to be transformed.

Now, all will depend upon the ideal which the effort for mastery and transformation seeks to achieve. The value of the effort and its result will depend upon the value of the ideal. This is the subject we shall deal with next in connection with mental education.

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VIII. MENTAL EDUCATION

Of all education, that of the mind is the best known and the most in use. And yet, except in a few rare cases, there are lacunae which make of it something very incomplete and, in the end, quite insufficient.

Generally speaking, education is taken to mean the required mental education. And when a child has been made to undergo, for a number of years, a course of severe training, which is more like stuffing the brain than educating it, it is considered that whatever is necessary for his mental growth has been done. But in reality nothing of the kind has been done. Even when the training is given with due measure and discrimination and does not impair the brain, it cannot impart to the human mind the faculties it needs to make a good and useful instrument. The education that is usually given can, at the most, serve as a gymnastic exercise to increase the suppleness of the brain. From this standpoint, each branch of human learning represents a special kind of mental gymnastics, and the verbal formulae used in each of these branches constitute, in each case, a special and well-defined language.

A true education of the mind, that which will prepare man for a higher life, has five principal phases. Normally these phases come one after another, but in exceptional individuals they may come alternately or even simultaneously. The five phases, in brief, are:

(1) Development of the power of concentration, the capacity of attention.

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(2) Development of the capacities of expansion, wideness, complexity and richness.

(3) Organisation of ideas around a central idea or a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea that will serve as a guide in life.

(4) Thought control, rejection of undesirable thoughts so that one may, in the end, think only what one wants and when one wants.

(5) Development of mental silence, perfect calm and a more and more total receptivity of inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being.

It is not possible to give here all the details concerning the methods to be employed in the application of these phases of education to different individuals. Still some explanatory indications can be given.

It cannot be gainsaid that what most impedes mental progress in the child is the constant dispersion of his thoughts. His thought flutters hither and thither like a butterfly and a great effort is required on his part to fix it. And yet the capacity is latent in him. For when you succeed in making him interested, he is capable of a good amount of attention. It is therefore the skill of the educator that will make the child gradually capable of a sustained effort at attention and a faculty of more and more complete absorption in the work while it is being done. All means are good that can develop this faculty of attention: they can all be utilised according to need and circumstances, from games up to rewards. But it is the psychological action that is most important: the sovereign means is to rouse in the child interest in the thing that one wishes to teach, the taste for work, the will to progress. To love to learn is the most precious gift that one can make to a child: to love to learn always and everywhere.

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Let all circumstances, all happenings in life be occasions, constantly renewed, for learning more and ever more.

For that, to attention and concentration should be added observation, precision of recording and faithfulness of memory. The faculty of observation can be developed by various and spontaneous exercises, making use of all opportunities that help to keep the child's thought wakeful, alert, quick. The growth of the understanding much more than that of memory should be insisted upon. One knows only what one understands. Things learnt by heart, mechanically, get blurred little by little and finally fade away. You do not forget what you understand. Moreover, you must never refuse to explain to a child the how and the why of things. If you cannot do it yourself, you must direct him to persons who are qualified to answer or to books dealing with the question. It is in this way that you will progressively awake in the child the taste for real study and the habit of a persistent effort to know.

This will take us naturally to the second phase of growth in which the mind is to enlarge and enrich itself.

As the child progresses you will show him how every thing can become an interesting subject for study, provided the question is approached in the right manner. The life of every day, of every moment is the best of all schools: it is varied, complex, rich in unforeseen experiences, in problems awaiting solution, in clear and striking examples and in evident sequences. It is so easy to rouse healthy curiosity in children, if you answer with intelligence and clarity the numberless questions they put. An interesting reply brings in its train others and the child, his attention attracted, learns without effort much more than what he usually does on the school bench. A careful and intelligent selection

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should also give him a taste for healthy reading which is at once instructive and attractive. Again, you must fear nothing that awakes and satisfies his imagination: it is imagination that develops the creative mental faculty and it is through that that study becomes a living thing and the mind grows in joy.

In order to increase the suppleness and comprehensiveness of the mind, one should not only look to the number and variety of subjects for study, but particularly to the diverse approaches to the same subject; by this means the child will be made to understand in a practical way that there are many ways of facing the same intellectual problem, dealing with it and solving it. The brain thus will be free from all rigidity and, at the same time, thought will gain in richness and suppleness and be made ready for a more complex and comprehensive synthesis. In this way also the child will be imbued with the sense of the extreme relativity of mental knowledge and, little by little, he will be awakened to an aspiration in him for a truer source of knowledge.

Indeed, as the child progresses in his studies and grows in age, his mind too ripens and is more and more capable of general ideas; and along with this, there always comes the need for certitude, for a knowledge stable enough to be made the basis of a mental construction which will permit all diverse and scattered and often contradictory ideas accumulated in the brain to be organised and put in order. This ordering is indeed very necessary if one is to avoid chaos in one's thoughts. All contradictories can be transformed into complementaries, but for that one must discover a higher idea that will be able to harmonise them. It is good to consider all problems from all possible standpoints to avoid partiality and exclusiveness: but if the thought is to

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be active and creative it must, in each case, be the natural and logical synthesis of all the points of view taken in. And if you are to make of the totality of your thoughts a dynamic and constructive force, you must take great care as to the choice of the central idea of your mental synthesis; for upon that will depend the value of your synthesis. The higher and larger the central idea and the more universal it is, rising above time and space, the more numerous and the more complex will be the ideas, notions and thoughts which it will be able to organise and harmonise.

It goes without saying that the work of organisation can not be done all at once. The mind, if it is to keep its vigour and youth, must progress constantly, revise its notions in the light of all new knowledge, enlarge its frame to include fresh notions and therefore re-classify and re-organise its thoughts, so that each one of them may find its proper place in relation to others and the whole thus stand harmonious and orderly.

All that has just been said, however, concerns the speculative mind, the mind that learns. But learning is only one aspect of mental activity; the other, at least as important, is the constructive faculty, the capacity to give form and therefore prepare for action. This part of mental activity, although very important, has rarely been the subject of any special study or discipline. Only those who want, for some reason, to exercise a strict control over their mental activities think of observing and disciplining this *faculty of formation*: even so, as soon as they try it, they find themselves faced by difficulties that appear almost insurmountable.

And yet control over this formative activity of the mind is one of the most important aspects of self-education: one

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can say that without it no mental mastery is possible. On the side of study, all ideas are acceptable and should be included in the synthesis whose very function would be to become more and more rich and complex; but, on the side of action, it is quite the contrary. A strict control should be put on ideas that are accepted for translation into action. Only those that agree with the general trend of the central idea forming the basis of the mental synthesis should be permitted to express themselves in action. This means that every thought entering the mental consciousness should be placed before the central ideal; if it finds a right place among the thoughts already grouped, it will be admitted into the synthesis; if not, it will be thrown out, so that it cannot have any influence upon the action. This work of mental purification should be done very regularly to secure a complete control over one's actions.

For that purpose, it is good to set apart every day some time when one can quietly go over one's thoughts and put order into one's synthesis. Once the habit is acquired, you can maintain your control over thoughts even during work and action and you will be able not to let any come to the fore that is not useful to the thing undertaken. Particularly, if the power of concentration and attention is continuously cultivated, the active external consciousness will allow only those thoughts that are needed and then they become all the more dynamic and effective. And if, in the intensity of concentration, it is necessary not to think at all, all mental vibration can be stopped and an almost total silence secured. In this silence one can open gradually to the higher mental regions and learn to record the inspirations that come from there.

But even before arriving at this point, silence in itself is

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supremely useful: in most people who have a somewhat developed and active mind, the mind is never at rest. During the day, its activity is put under a certain control, but at night, during the sleep of the body, the control of the waking state is almost completely removed and the mind indulges in excessive and often incoherent activities. This creates a great tension ending in fatigue and diminution of mental faculties.

The fact is that, like all the other parts of the human being, the mind too needs rest and this rest it will not have unless we know how to give it. The art of giving rest to one's mind is a thing to be acquired. Changing mental activity is a way of rest; but the greatest possible rest lies in silence. And in the case of mental faculties, a few minutes passed in the calm of silence mean a more effective rest than hours of sleep.

When one will have learnt to silence the mind at will and concentrate it in the receptive silence, then there will be no problem that one cannot solve, no mental difficulty to which a solution will not be found. Thought, while in agitation, becomes confused and impotent; in an attentive tranquillity, the light can manifest itself and open new horizons to man's capacity.

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THE PSYCHIC AND THE SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

TILL now we have dealt with the education which can be given to all children born upon earth; it is concerned with purely human faculties. But one need not stop there. Every human being carries hidden within him the possibility of a greater consciousness beyond the frame of his normal life through which he can participate in a higher and vaster life. Indeed, in all exceptional beings it is always this consciousness that governs their life, and organises both the circumstances of their life and their individual reaction to these circumstances. What the human mind does not know and cannot do, this consciousness knows and does. It is like a light that shines at the centre of the being radiating through the thick coverings of the external consciousness. Some have a vague perception of its presence; a good many children are under its influence which shows itself very distinctly at times in their spontaneous reactions and even in their words. Unfortunately parents most often do not know what it is and do not understand what is happening in their children; therefore their reaction with regard to these phenomena is not happy, and all their education consists in making the child as unconscious as possible in this domain, concentrate all its attention upon external things and thus form the habit of looking upon those alone as important. This concentration upon external things is very useful; but it must be done in the proper way. The three lines of education—physical, vital and mental—deal with that which may be defined as the means of building up the personality, raising the individual

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out of the amorphous subconscious mass, making it a well-defined self-conscious entity. With psychic education we come to the problem of the true motive of life, the reason of our existence upon earth, the very discovery to which life must lead and the result of that discovery, the consecration of the individual to his eternal principle. This discovery very generally is associated with a mystic feeling, a religious life, because it is religions particularly that have been occupied with this aspect of life. But it need not be necessarily so: the mystic notion of God may be replaced by the more philosophical notion of truth and still the discovery will remain essentially the same, only the road leading to it may be taken even by the most intransigent positivist. For mental notions and ideas possess a very secondary importance in preparing one for the psychic life. The important thing is to live the experience; for it carries its own reality and force apart from any theory that may precede or accompany or follow it; because most often theories are mere explanations that are given to oneself in order to have more or less the illusion of knowledge. Man clothes the ideal or the absolute he seeks to attain with different names according to the environment in which he is born and the education he has received. The experience is essentially the same, if it is sincere: it is only the words and phrases in which it is formulated that differ according to the belief and the mental education of the person who experiences. All formulation is only an approximation that should be progressive and grow in precision as the experience itself becomes more and more precise and coordinated. Still, if we are to give a general outline of psychic education, we must have an idea, however relative it may be, of what we mean by the psychic being. Thus one can say, for

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example, that the creation of an individual being is the result of the projection, in time and space, of one of the countless possibilities latent in the Supreme Origin of all manifestation which, through the one and universal consciousness, is concretised in the law or the truth of an individual and so becomes by a progressive growth its soul or psychic being.

I stress the point that what I have said here in brief does not profess to be a complete exposition of the reality and does not exhaust the subject—far from it. It is just a summary explanation for a practical purpose so that it can serve as a basis for the education with which we are concerned.

It is through the psychic presence that the truth of an individual being comes into contact with him and the circumstances of his life. In most cases this presence acts, so to say, from behind the veil, unrecognised and unknown; but in some, it is perceptible and its action recognisable; in a few among these, again, the presence becomes tangible and its action quite effective. These go forward in their life with an assurance and a certitude all their own, they are masters of their destiny. It is precisely with a view to obtain this mastery and become conscious of the psychic presence that psychic education has to be pursued. But for that there is need of a special factor, the personal will. For till now, the discovery of the psychic being, the identification with it, has not been among the recognised subjects of education. It is true one can find in special treatises useful and practical hints on the subject, and also there are persons fortunate enough to meet someone capable of showing the path and giving the necessary help to follow it. More often, however, the attempt is left to one's own personal initiative: the discovery is a personal matter and a great resolution, a

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strong will and an untiring perseverance are indispensable to reach the goal. Each one must, so to say, chalk out his own path through his own difficulties. The goal is known to some extent; for, most of those who have reached it have described it more or less clearly. But the supreme value of the discovery lies in its spontaneity, its genuineness: that escapes all ordinary mental laws. And this is why anyone wanting to take up the adventure, usually seeks at first some person who has gone through it successfully and is able to sustain him and show him the way. Yet there are some solitary travellers and for them a few general indications may be useful.

The starting-point is to seek in yourself that which is independent of the body and the circumstances of life, which is not born of the mental formation that you have been given, the language you speak, the habits and customs of the environment in which you live, the country where you are born or the age to which you belong. You must find, in the depths of your being, that which carries in it the sense of universality, limitless expansion, termless continuity. Then you decentralise, spread out, enlarge yourself; you begin to live in everything and in all beings; the barriers separating individuals from each other break down. You think in their thoughts, vibrate in their sensations, you feel in their feelings, you live in the life of all. What seemed inert suddenly becomes full of life, stones quicken, plants feel and will and suffer, animals speak in a language more or less inarticulate, but clear and expressive; everything is animated with a marvellous consciousness without time and limit. And this is only one aspect of the psychic realisation. There are many others. All combine in pulling you out of the barriers

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of your egoism, the walls of your external personality, the impotence of your reactions and the incapacity of your will.

But, as I have already said, the path to come to that realisation is long and difficult, strewn with traps and problems, and to face them demands a determination that must be equal to all test and trial. It is like the explorer's journey through virgin forest, in quest of an unknown land, towards a great discovery. The psychic being is also a great discovery to be made requiring as much fortitude and endurance as the discovery of new continents. A few words of advice may be useful to one resolved to undertake it:

The first and most important point which must never be forgotten is that with the mind it is impossible to judge of spiritual things. All who have written on yogic discipline have said so, but very few are those who put it into practice and yet, in order to proceed on the path, it is absolutely indispensable to abstain from all mental judgment, mental opinion and reaction.

Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as a help for progress and make at once the progress required.

Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure. Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly quiet in the face of anything and everything. And yet be always awake to find out the progress you have still to make and lose no time in making it.

Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else,

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the true thing which escapes your superficial understanding.

Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him so behave; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining.

Whatever you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you. There is nothing small or big in this enterprise of a great discovery; all things are equally important and can either hasten or delay its success. Thus before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you will take brings to your body the substance necessary to serve as a solid basis for your effort towards the great discovery, and give it the energy of persistence and perseverance in the effort.

Before you go to bed, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves, bring to your brain calmness and quietness that on waking up you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

Before you act, concentrate in the will that your action may help, at least not hinder in any way, your march forward towards the great discovery.

When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate awhile just long enough to check your words and allow those alone that are absolutely necessary and are not in any way harmful to your progress on the path of the great discovery.

In brief, never forget the purpose and the goal of your life. The will for the great discovery should be always there soaring over you, above what you do and what you are, like a huge bird of light dominating all the movements of your being.

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Before the untiring persistence of your effort, an inner door will open suddenly and you will come out into a dazzling splendour that will bring to you the certitude of immortality, the concrete experience that you have lived always and always shall live, that the external forms alone perish and that these forms are, in relation to what you are in reality, like clothes that are thrown away when worn out. Then you will stand erect freed from all chains and instead of advancing with difficulty under the load of circumstances imposed upon you by nature, borne and suffered by you, you can, if you do not want to be crushed under them, walk on straight and firm, conscious of your destiny, master of your life.

And yet this release from all slavery to the flesh, this liberation from all personal attachment is not the supreme fulfilment. There are other steps to take before you reach the summit. And even these steps can and should be followed by others which will open the gates of the future. It is these later steps that will be the subject-matter of what I call spiritual education.

But before we enter this new stage and deal with the question in detail, an explanation is useful. Why is it necessary to make a distinction between the psychic education of which we have just now spoken and the spiritual education of which we are going to speak presently? It is necessary because the two are usually mixed up under the generic name "yogic discipline", although the goal they aim at is very different in each case: for one, it is a higher realisation upon earth, for the other, an escape from all earthly manifestation, even away from the whole universe, a return to the unmanifest.

So one can say that the psychic life is the life immortal,

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endless time, limitless space, ever-progressive change, unbroken continuity in the world of forms. The spiritual consciousness, on the other hand, means to live the infinite and eternal, to throw oneself outside all creation, beyond time and space. To become fully aware of your psychic being and to live a psychic life you must abolish in you all selfishness; but to live a spiritual life you must be selfless.

Here also in spiritual education, the goal you set before you will assume, in the mind's formulation of it, different names according to the environment in which you have grown, the path you have followed and the affinities of your temperament. If you have a religious tendency you will call it God and your spiritual effort will be towards identification with the transcendent God beyond all form, in opposition to the Immanent God dwelling in each form. Others will call it the Absolute, the Supreme Origin, others again, Nirvana; yet others who view the world as an unreal illusion will name it the Only Reality and to those who regard all manifestation as falsehood it will be the Sole Truth. And everyone of these definitions contains an element of truth, but all are incomplete, expressing only one aspect of what is. Here also the mental formulation has no great importance and once you go beyond the intermediate steps, it is always the same experience. In any case, the most effective starting-point, the swiftest method is total self-surrender. Besides, no joy is more perfect than that of a total self-surrender to the highest point your conception can reach: for some it is the notion of God, for others that of Perfection. If this surrender is made with persistence and ardour, a moment comes when you go beyond the concept and arrive at an experience that escapes all description, but which is almost always identical in its effect on the being.

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As your surrender becomes more and more perfect and integral, it will carry with it the aspiration for identification, a total fusion with That to which you have given yourself, and little by little this aspiration will overcome all differences and all resistances, especially if the aspiration has, added to it, an intense and spontaneous love; then nothing can stand in the way of its victorious onset.

There is an essential difference between this identification and the one with the psychic being. The latter can be made more and more durable and, in certain cases, it becomes permanent and never leaves the person who has realised it, whatever may be his outer activities. In other words, the identification is no more realised only in meditation and concentration, but its effect can be felt at every moment of one's life, in sleep as well as in waking.

On the contrary, liberation from all form and identification with that which is beyond form cannot last in an absolute manner; for it would automatically bring about the dissolution of the material form. Certain traditions say that this dissolution happens inevitably within twenty days of the total identification. Yet it is not necessarily so; and even if the experience is momentary, it produces in the consciousness results that are never obliterated and have repercussions on all the levels of the being, both internal and external. Moreover, once the identification has been made, it can be renewed at will, provided you know how to put yourself in the same conditions.

This merging into the formless is the supreme liberation sought by those who want to escape from existence which has no attraction for them any more. It is nothing surprising that they are not satisfied with the world in its present form. But a liberation that leaves the world as it

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is and does in no way affect the conditions of life from which others suffer, cannot satisfy those who refuse to live in a felicity which they alone enjoy, and who dream of a world more worthy of the splendours that hide behind its apparent disorder and general misery. They dream that others should profit by the wonders they have discovered in their inner explorations. And the means to do so is within their reach, now that they have arrived at the summit of their ascent.

From beyond the frontiers of form, a new force can be evoked, a power of consciousness which has not yet manifested and which, by its emergence, will be able to change the course of things and bring to birth a new world. For the true solution of the problem of suffering, ignorance and death is not the individual escape by self-annihilation from earthly miseries into the non-manifest, nor a problematical collective escape from universal suffering by an integral and final return of the creation to its creator, thus curing the universe by abolishing it, but a transformation, a total transfiguration of matter brought about by the logical continuation of Nature's ascending march in her progress towards perfection, by the creation of a new species that will be in relation to man what man is in relation to the animal and that will manifest upon earth a new force, a new consciousness and a new power. Then will begin also a new education which can be called the supramental education; it will, by its all-powerful action, work not only upon the consciousness of individual beings, but upon the very substance of which they are built and upon the environment in which they live.

Contrary to the type of education we have spoken of hitherto that progresses from below upward through an ascending

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movement of the different parts of the being, the supramental education will progress from above downward, its influence spreading from one state of being to another till the final state, the physical, is reached. This last transformation will happen in a visible manner only when the inner states of being have already been considerably transformed. It would be therefore quite unreasonable to try to judge the presence of the supramental by physical appearances. The physical is the last to change and the supramental force can be at work in a being long before something of it becomes perceptible in the life of the body.

In brief, one can say that the supramental education will result not merely in a progressively developing formation of the human nature, an increasing growth of its latent faculties, but a transformation of the nature itself, a transformation of the being in its entirety, a new ascent of the species above and beyond man towards superman, leading in the end to the appearance of the divine race upon earth.

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X. MESSAGE

I TAKE the opportunity of the publication of this issue of the "Bulletin d'Education Physique" of the Ashram to give my blessings to the Journal and the Association—J.S.A.S.A. (Jeunesse Sportive de l'Ashram de Sri Aurobindo). In doing so I would like to dwell for a while on the deeper raison d'être of such Associations and especially the need and utility for the nation of a widespread organisation of them and such sports or physical exercises as are practised here. In their more superficial aspect they appear merely as games and amusements which people take up for entertainment or as a field for the outlet of the body's energy and natural instinct of activity or for a means of the development and maintenance of the health and strength of the body; but they are or can be much more than that: they are also fields for the development of habits, capacities and qualities which are greatly needed and of the utmost service to a people in war or in peace, and in its political and social activities, in most indeed of the provinces of a combined human endeavour. It is to this which we may call the national aspect of the subject that I would wish to give especial prominence.

In our own time these sports, games and athletics have assumed a place and command a general interest such as was seen only in earlier times in countries like Greece, Greece where all sides of human activity were equally developed and the gymnasium, chariot-racing and other sports and athletics had the same importance on the physical side as on the mental side the Arts and poetry and the drama, and were especially stimulated and attended to by the civic

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authorities of the City State. It was Greece that made an institution of the Olympiad and the recent re-establishment of the Olympiad as an international institution is a significant sign of the revival of the ancient spirit. This kind of interest has spread to a certain extent to our own country and India has begun to take a place in international contests such as the Olympiad. The newly founded State in liberated India is also beginning to be interested in developing all sides of the life of the nation and is likely to take an active part and a habit of direction in fields which were formerly left to private initiative. It is taking up, for instance, the question of the foundation and preservation of health and physical fitness in the nation and in the spreading of a general recognition of its importance. It is in this connection that the encouragement of sports and associations for athletics and all activities of this kind would be an incalculable assistance. A generalisation of the habit of taking part in such exercises in childhood and youth and early manhood would help greatly towards the creation of physically fit and energetic people.

But of a higher import than the foundation, however necessary, of health, strength and fitness of the body is the development of discipline and morale and sound and strong character towards which these activities can help. There are many sports which are of the utmost value towards this end, because they help to form and even necessitate the qualities of courage, hardihood, energetic action and initiative or call for skill, steadiness of will or rapid decision and action, the perception of what is to be done in an emergency and dexterity in doing it. One development of the utmost value is the awakening of the essential and instinctive body consciousness which can see and do what is neces-

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sary without any indication from mental thought and which is equivalent in the body to swift insight in the mind and spontaneous and rapid decision in the will. One may add the formation of a capacity for harmonious and right movements of the body, especially in a combined action, economic of physical effort and discouraging waste of energy, which result from such exercises as marches or drill and which displace the loose and straggling, the inharmonious or disorderly or wasteful movements common to the untrained individual body. Another invaluable result of these activities is the growth of what has been called the sporting spirit. That includes good humour and tolerance and consideration for all, a right attitude and friendliness to competitors and rivals, self-control and scrupulous observance of the laws of the game, fair play and avoidance of the use of foul means, an equal acceptance of victory or defeat without bad humour, resentment or ill-will towards successful competitors, loyal acceptance of the decisions of the appointed judge, umpire or referee. These qualities have their value for life in general and not only for sport, but the help that sport can give to their development is direct and invaluable. If they could be made more common not only in the life of the individual but in the national life and in the international where at the present day the opposite tendencies have become too rampant, existence in this troubled world of ours would be smoother and might open to a greater chance of concord and amity of which it stands very much in need. More important still is the custom of discipline, obedience, order, habit of team-work, which certain games necessitate. For, without them success is uncertain or impossible. Innumerable are the activities in life, especially in national life, in which leadership and obedience to leadership in

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combined action are necessary for success, victory in combat or fulfilment of a purpose. The role of the leader, the captain, the power and skill of his leadership, his ability to command, the confidence and ready obedience of his followers is of the utmost importance in all kinds of combined action or enterprise; but few can develop these things without having learnt themselves to obey and to act as one mind or as one body with others. This strictness of training, this habit of discipline and obedience is not inconsistent with individual freedom; it is often the necessary condition for its right use, just as order is not inconsistent with liberty but rather the condition for the right use of liberty and even for its preservation and survival. In all kinds of concerted action this rule is indispensable: orchestration becomes necessary and there could be no success for an orchestra in which individual musicians played according to their own fancy and refused to follow the indications of the conductor. In spiritual things also the same rule holds; a sadhak who disregarded the guidance of the Guru and preferred the untrained inspirations of the novice could hardly escape the stumbles or even the disasters which so often lie thick around the path to spiritual realisation. I need not enumerate the other benefits which can be drawn from the training that sport can give or dwell on their use in the national life; what I have said is sufficient. At any rate, in schools like ours and in universities sports have now a recognised and indispensable place; for even a highest and completest education of the mind is not enough without the education of the body. Where the qualities I have enumerated are absent or insufficiently present, a strong individual will or a national will may build them up, but the aid given by sports to their development is direct and in no way

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negligible. This would be a sufficient reason for the attention given to them in our Ashram, though there are others which I need not mention here. I am concerned here with their importance and the necessity of the qualities they create or stimulate for our national life. The nation which possesses them in the highest degree is likely to be the strongest for victory, success and greatness, but also for the contribution it can make towards the bringing about of unity and a more harmonious world order towards which we look as our hope for humanity's future.

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SPECIAL APPENDIX

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I. PERFECTION OF THE BODY

THE perfection of the body, as great a perfection as we can bring about by the means at our disposal, must be the ultimate aim of physical culture. Perfection is the true aim of all culture, the spiritual and psychic, the mental, the vital and it must be the aim of our physical culture also. If our seeking is for a total perfection of the being, the physical part of it cannot be left aside; for the body is the material basis, the body is the instrument which we have to use. *Sharīram khalu dharma-sādhanam*, says the old Sanskrit adage,—the body is the means of fulfilment of dharma, and dharma means every ideal which we can propose to ourselves and the law of its working out and its action. A total perfection is the ultimate aim which we set before us, for our ideal is the Divine Life which we wish to create here, the life of the Spirit fulfilled on earth, life accomplishing its own spiritual transformation even here on earth in the conditions of the material universe. That cannot be unless the body too undergoes a transformation, unless its action and functioning attain to a supreme capacity and the perfection which is possible to it or which can be made possible.

I have already indicated in a previous message a relative perfection of the physical consciousness in the body and of the mind, the life, the character which it houses as, no less than an awakening and development of the body's own native capacities, a desirable outcome of the exercises and practices of the physical culture to which we have commenced to give in this Ashram a special attention and

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scope. A development of the physical consciousness must always be a considerable part of our aim, but for that the right development of the body itself is an essential element; health, strength, fitness are the first needs, but the physical frame itself must be the best possible. A divine life in a material world implies necessarily a union of the two ends of existence, the spiritual summit and the material base. The soul with the basis of its life established in Matter ascends to the heights of the Spirit but does not cast away its base, it joins the heights and the depths together. The Spirit descends into Matter and the material world with all its lights and glories and powers and with them fills and transforms life in the material world so that it becomes more and more divine. The transformation is not a change into something purely subtle and spiritual to which Matter is in its nature repugnant and by which it is felt as an obstacle or as a shackle binding the Spirit; it takes up Matter as a form of the Spirit though now a form which conceals and turns it into a revealing instrument, it does not cast away the energies of Matter, its capacities, its methods; it brings out their hidden possibilities, uplifts, sublimates, discloses their innate divinity. The divine life will reject nothing that is capable of divinisation; all is to be seized, exalted, made utterly perfect. The mind now still ignorant, though struggling towards knowledge, has to rise towards and into the supramental light and truth and bring it down so that it shall suffuse our thinking and perception and insight and all our means of knowing till they become radiant with the highest truth in their inmost and outermost movements. Our life, still full of obscurity and confusion and occupied with so many dull and lower aims, must feel all its urges and instincts exalted and irradiated and become a

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glorious counterpart of the supramental super-life above. The physical consciousness and physical being, the body itself must reach a perfection in all that it is and does which now we can hardly conceive. It may even in the end be suffused with a light and beauty and bliss from the Beyond and the life divine assume a body divine.

But first the evolution of the nature must have reached a point at which it can meet the Spirit direct, feel the aspiration towards the spiritual change and open itself to the workings of the Power which shall transform it. A supreme perfection, a total perfection is possible only by a transformation of our lower or human nature, a transformation of the mind into a thing of light, our life into a thing of power, an instrument of right action, right use for all its forces, of a happy elevation of its being lifting it beyond its present comparatively narrow potentiality for a self-fulfilling force of action and joy of life. There must be equally a transforming change of the body by a conversion of its action, its functioning, its capacities as an instrument beyond the limitations by which it is clogged and hampered even in its greatest present human attainment. In the totality of the change we have to achieve, human means and forces too have to be taken up, not dropped but used and magnified to their utmost possibility as part of the new life. Such a sublimation of our present human powers of mind and life into elements of a divine life on earth can be conceived without much difficulty; but in what figure shall we conceive the perfection of the body?

In the past the body has been regarded by spiritual seekers rather as an obstacle, as something to be overcome and discarded than as an instrument of spiritual perfection and a field of the spiritual change. It has been condemned as a

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grossness of Matter, as an insuperable impediment and the limitations of the body as something unchangeable making transformation impossible. This is because the human body even at its best seems only to be driven by an energy of life which has its own limits and is debased in its smaller physical activities by much that is petty or coarse or evil, the body in itself is burdened with the inertia and inconscience of Matter, only partly awake and, although quickened and animated by a nervous activity, subconscient in the fundamental action of its constituent cells and tissues and their secret workings. Even in its fullest strength and force and greatest glory of beauty, it is still a flower of the material Inconscience; the inconscient is the soil from which it has grown and at every point opposes a narrow boundary to the extension of its powers and to any effort of radical self-exceeding. But if a divine life is possible on earth, then this self-exceeding must also be possible.

In the pursuit of perfection we can start at either end of our range of being and we have then to use, initially at least, the means and processes proper to our choice. In Yoga the process is spiritual and psychic; even its vital and physical processes are given a spiritual or psychic turn and raised to a higher motion than belongs properly to the ordinary life and Matter, as for instance in the Hathayogic and Rajayogic use of the breathing or the use of Asana. Ordinarily a previous preparation of the mind and life and body is necessary to make them fit for the reception of the spiritual energy and the organisation of psychic forces and methods, but this too is given a special turn proper to the Yoga. On the other hand, if we start in any field at the lower end we have to employ the means and processes which Life and Matter offer to us and respect the conditions

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and what we may call the technique imposed by the vital and the material energy. We may extend the activity, the achievement, the perfection attained beyond the initial, even beyond the normal possibilities but still we have to stand on the same base with which we started and within the boundaries it gives to us. It is not that the action from the two ends cannot meet and the higher take into itself and uplift the lower perfection; but this can usually be done only by a transition from the lower to a higher outlook, aspiration and motive: this we shall have to do if our aim is to transform the human into the divine life. But here there comes in the necessity of taking up the activities of human life and sublimating them by the power of the spirit. Here the lower perfection will not disappear; it will remain but will be enlarged and transformed by the higher perfection which only the power of the spirit can give. This will be evident if we consider poetry and art, philosophic thought, the perfection of the written word or the perfect organisation of earthly life: these have to be taken up and the possibilities already achieved or whatever perfection has already been attained included in a new and greater perfection but with the larger vision and inspiration of a spiritual consciousness and with new forms and powers. It must be the same with the perfection of the body.

The taking up of life and Matter into what is essentially a spiritual seeking, instead of the rejection and ultimate exclusion of them which was the attitude of a spirituality that shunned or turned away from life in the world, involves certain developments which a spiritual institution of the older kind could regard as foreign to its purpose. A divine life in the world or an institution having that for its aim and purpose cannot be or cannot remain something outside or

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entirely shut away from the life of ordinary men in the world or unconcerned with the mundane existence; it has to do the work of the Divine in the world and not a work outside or separate from it. The life of the ancient Rishis in their Ashramas had such a connection; they were creators, educators, guides of men and the life of the Indian people in ancient time was largely developed and directed by their shaping influence. The life and activities involved in the new endeavour are not identical but they too must be an action upon the world and a new creation in it. It must have contacts and connections with it and activities which take their place in the general life and whose initial or primary objects may not seem to differ from those of the same activities in the outside world. In our Ashram here we have found it necessary to establish a school for the education of the children of the resident sadhaks teaching upon familiar lines though with certain modifications and taking as part and an important part of their development an intensive physical training which has given form to the sports and athletics practised by the Jeunesse Sportive of the Ashram and of which this Bulletin is the expression. It has been questioned by some what place sports can have in an Ashram created for spiritual seekers and what connection there can be between spirituality and sports. The first answer lies in what I have already written about the connections of an institution of this kind with the activities of the general life of men and what I have indicated in the previous number as to the utility such a training can have for the life of a nation and its benefit for the international life. Another answer can occur to us if we look beyond first objects and turn to the aspiration for a total perfection including the perfection of the body.

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In the admission of an activity such as sports and physical exercises into the life of the Ashram it is evident that the methods and the first objects to be attained must belong to what we have called the lower end of the being. Originally they have been introduced for the physical education and bodily development of the children of the Ashram School and these are too young for a strictly spiritual aim or practice to enter into their activities and it is not certain that any great number of them will enter the spiritual life when they are of an age to choose what shall be the direction of their future. The object must be the training of the body and the development of certain parts of mind and character so far as this can be done by or in connection with this training and I have already indicated in a previous number how and in what directions this can be done. It is a relative and human perfection that can be attained within these limits; anything greater can be reached only by the intervention of higher powers, psychic powers, the power of the spirit. Yet what can be attained within the human boundaries can be something very considerable and sometimes immense: what we call genius is part of the development of the human range of being and its achievements, especially in things of the mind and will, can carry us halfway to the divine. Even what the mind and will can do with the body in the field proper to the body and its life, in the way of physical achievement, bodily endurance, feats of prowess of all kind, a lasting activity refusing fatigue or collapse and continuing beyond what seems at first to be possible, courage and refusal to succumb under an endless and murderous physical suffering, these and other victories of many kinds sometimes approaching or reaching the miraculous are seen in the human field and must be reckoned as a

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part of our concept of a total perfection. The unflinching and persistent reply that can be made by the body as well as the mind of man and by his life energy to whatever call can be imposed on it in the most difficult and discouraging circumstances by the necessities of war and travel and adventure is of the same kind and their endurance can reach astounding proportions and even the inconscient in the body seems to be able to return a surprising response.

The body, we have said, is a creation of the Inconscient and itself inconscient or at least subconscient in parts of its self and much of its hidden action; but what we call the Inconscient is an appearance, a dwelling place, an instrument of a secret Consciousness or a Superconscient which has created the miracle we call the universe. Matter is the field and the creation of the Inconscient and the perfection of the operations of inconscient Matter, their perfect adaptation of means to an aim and end, the wonders they perform and the marvels of beauty they create, testify, in spite of all the ignorant denial we can oppose, to the presence and power of consciousness of this Superconscience in every part and movement of the material universe. It is there in the body, has made it and its emergence in our consciousness is the secret aim of evolution and the key to the mystery of our existence.

In the use of such activities as sports and physical exercises for the education of the individual in childhood and first youth, which should mean the bringing out of his actual and latent possibilities to their fullest development, the means and methods we must use are limited by the nature of the body and its aim must be such relative human perfection of the body's powers and capacities and those of the powers of mind, will, character, action of which it

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is at once the residence and the instrument so far as these methods can help to develop them. I have written sufficiently about the mental and moral parts of perfection to which these pursuits can contribute and this I need not repeat here. For the body itself the perfections that can be developed by these means are those of its natural qualities and capacities and, secondly, the training of its general fitness, as an instrument for all the activities which may be demanded from it by the mind and the will, by the life-energy or by the dynamic perceptions, impulses and instincts of our subtle physical being which is an unrecognised but very important element and agent in our nature. Health and strength are the first conditions for the natural perfection of the body, not only muscular strength and the solid strength of the limbs and physical stamina, but the finer, alert and plastic and adaptable force which our nervous and subtle physical parts can put into the activities of the frame. There is also the still more dynamic force which a call upon the life-energies can bring into the body and stir it to greater activities, even feats of the most extraordinary character of which in its normal state it would not be capable. There is also the strength which the mind and will by their demands and stimulus and by their secret powers which we use or by which we are used without knowing clearly the source of their action can impart to the body or impose upon it as masters and inspirers. Among the natural qualities and powers of the body which can be thus awakened, stimulated and trained to a normal activity we must reckon dexterity and stability in all kinds of physical action such as swiftness in the race, dexterity in combat, skill and endurance of the mountaineer, the constant and often extraordinary response to all that can be

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demanded from the body of the soldier, sailor, traveller or explorer to which I have already made reference or in adventure of all kinds and all the wide range of physical attainment to which man has accustomed himself or to which he is exceptionally pushed by his own will or by the compulsion of circumstance. It is a general fitness of the body for all that can be asked from it which is the common formula of all this action, a fitness attained by a few or by many, that could be generalised by an extended and many-sided physical education and discipline. Some of these activities can be included under the name of sports; there are others for which sport and physical exercises can be an effective preparation. In some of them a training for common action, combined movement, discipline are needed and for that our physical exercises can make one ready; in others a developed individual will, skill of mind and quick perception, forcefulness of life-energy and subtle physical impulsion are more prominently needed and may even be the one sufficient trainer. All must be included in our conception of the natural powers of the body and its capacity and instrumental fitness in the service of the human mind and will and therefore in our concept of the total perfection of the body.

There are two conditions for this perfection, an awakening in as great an entirety as possible of the body consciousness and an education, an evocation of its potentialities, also as entire and fully developed and, it may be, as many-sided as possible. The form or body is, no doubt, in its origin a creation of the Inconscient and limited by it on all sides, but still of the Inconscient developing the secret consciousness concealed within it and growing in light of knowledge, power and Ananda. We have to take it

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at the point it has reached in its human evolution in these things, make as full a use of them as may be and, as much as we can, further this evolution to as high a degree as is permitted by the force of the individual temperament and nature. In all forms in the world there is a force at work, unconsciously active or oppressed by inertia in its lower formulations, but in the human being conscious from the first, with its potentialities partly awake, partly asleep or latent: what is awake in it we have to make fully conscious; what is asleep we have to arouse and set to its work; what is latent we have to evoke and educate. Here there are two aspects of the body consciousness, one which seems to be a kind of automatism carrying on its work in the physical plane without any intervention of the mind and in parts even beyond any possibility of direct observation by the mind or, if conscious or observable, still proceeding or capable of continuing, when once started, by an apparently mechanical action not needing direction by the mind and continuing so long as the mind does not intervene.

There are other movements taught and trained by the mind which can yet go on operating automatically but faultlessly even when not attended to by the thought or will; there are others which can operate in sleep and produce results of value to the waking intelligence. But more important is what may be described as a trained and developed automatism, a perfected skill and capacity of eye and ear and the hands and all the members prompt to respond to any call made on them, a developed spontaneous operation as an instrument, a complete fitness for any demand that the mind and life-energy can make upon it. This is ordinarily the best we can achieve at the lower end, when we start from that end and limit ourselves to the means and

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methods which are proper to it. For more we have to turn to the mind and life-energy themselves or to the energy of the spirit and to what they can do for a greater perfection of the body. The most we can do in the physical field by physical means is necessarily insecure as well as bound by limits; even what seems a perfect health and strength of the body is precarious and can be broken down at any moment by fluctuations from within or by a strong attack or shock from outside: only by the breaking of our limitations can a higher and more enduring perfection come. One direction in which our consciousness must grow is an increasing hold from within or from above on the body and its powers and its more conscious response to the higher parts of our being. The mind pre-eminently is man; he is a mental being and his human perfection grows the more he fulfils the description of the Upanishad, a mental being, Purusha, leader of the life and the body. If the mind can take up and control the instincts and automatisms of the life-energy and the subtle physical consciousness and the body, if it can enter into them, consciously use and, as we may say, fully mentalise their instinctive or spontaneous action, the perfection of these energies, their action too becomes more conscious and more aware of themselves and more perfect. But it is necessary for the mind too to grow in perfection and this it can do best when it depends less on the fallible intellect of physical mind, when it is not limited even by the more orderly and accurate working of the reason and can grow in intuition and acquire a wider, deeper and closer seeing and the more luminous drive of energy of a higher intuitive will. Even within the limits of its present evolution it is difficult to measure the degree to which the mind is able to extend its control or

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its use of the body's powers and capacities and when the mind rises to higher powers still and pushes back its human boundaries, it becomes impossible to fix any limits: even, in certain realisations, an intervention by the will in the automatic working of the bodily organs seems to become possible. Wherever limitations recede and in proportion as they recede, the body becomes a more plastic and responsive and in that measure a more fit and perfect instrument of the action of the spirit. In all effective and expressive activities here in the material world the cooperation of the two ends of our being is indispensable. If the body is unable whether by fatigue or by natural incapacity or any other cause to second the thought or will or is in any way irresponsive or insufficiently responsive to that extent the action fails or falls short or becomes in some degree unsatisfying or incomplete. In what seems to be an exploit of the spirit so purely mental as the outpouring of poetic inspiration, there must be a responsive vibration of the brain and its openness as a channel for the power of the thought and vision and the light of the word that is making or breaking its way through or seeking for its perfect expression. If the brain is fatigued or dulled by any clog, either the inspiration cannot come and nothing is written or it fails and something inferior is all that can come out; or else a lower inspiration takes the place of the more luminous formulation that was striving to shape itself or the brain finds it more easy to lend itself to a less radiant stimulus or else it labours and constructs or responds to poetic artifice. Even in the most purely mental activities the fitness, readiness or perfect training of the bodily instrument is a condition indispensable. That readiness, that response too is part of the total perfection of the body.

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The essential purpose and sign of the growing evolution here is the emergence of consciousness in an apparently inconscient universe, the growth of consciousness and with it growth of the light and power of the being; the development of the form and its functioning or its fitness to survive, although indispensable, is not the whole meaning or the central motive. The greater and greater awakening of consciousness and its climb to a higher and higher level and a wider extent of its vision and action is the condition of our progress towards that supreme and total perfection which is the aim of our existence. It is the condition also of the total perfection of the body. There are higher levels of the mind than any we now conceive and to these we must one day reach and rise beyond them to the heights of a greater, a spiritual existence. As we rise we have to open to them our lower members and fill these with those superior and supreme dynamisms of light and power; the body we have to make a more and more and even entirely conscious frame and instrument, a conscious sign and seal and power of the spirit. As it grows in this perfection, the force and extent of its dynamic action and its response and service to the spirit must increase, the control of the spirit over it also must grow and the plasticity of its functioning both in its developed and acquired parts of power and in its automatic responses down to those that are now purely organic and seem to be the movements of a mechanic inconscience. This cannot happen without a veritable transformation and a transformation of the mind and life and very body is indeed the change to which our evolution is secretly moving and without this transformation the entire fullness of a divine life on earth cannot emerge. In this transformation the body itself can become an agent and a partner.

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It might indeed be possible for the spirit to achieve a considerable manifestation with only a passive and imperfectly conscious body as its last or bottommost means of material functioning, but this could not be anything perfect or complete. A fully conscious body might even discover and work out the right material method and process of a material transformation. For this, no doubt, the spirit's supreme light and power and creative joy must have manifested on the summit of the individual consciousness and sent down their fiat into the body, but still the body may take in the working out its spontaneous part of self-discovery and achievement. It would be thus a participator and agent in its own transformation and the integral transformation of the whole being; this too would be a part and a sign and evidence of the total perfection of the body.

If the emergence and growth of consciousness is the central motive of the evolution and the key to its secret purpose, then by the very nature of that evolution this growth must involve not only a wider and wider extent of its capacities but also an ascent to a higher and higher level till it reaches the highest possible. For it starts from a nethermost level of involution in the Inconscience which we see at work in Matter creating the material universe; it proceeds by an Ignorance which is yet ever developing knowledge and reaching out to an ever greater light and ever greater organisation and efficacy of the will and harmonisation of all its own inherent and emerging powers; it must at last reach a point where it develops or acquires the complete fullness of its capacity and that must be a state or action in which there is no longer an ignorance seeking for knowledge but Knowledge self-possessed, inherent in

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the being, master of its own truths and working them out with a natural vision and force that is not afflicted by limitation or error. Or if there is a limitation, it must be a self-imposed veil behind which it would keep truth back for a manifestation in Time but draw it out at will and without any need of search or acquisition in the order of a right perception of things or in the just succession of that which has to be manifested in obedience to the call of Time. This would mean an entry or approach into what might be called a truth-consciousness self-existent in which the being would be aware of its own realities and would have the inherent power to manifest them in a Time-creation in which all would be Truth following out its own unerring steps and combining its own harmonies; every thought and will and feeling and act would be spontaneously right, inspired or intuitive, moving by the light of Truth and therefore perfect. All would express inherent realities of the spirit; some fullness of the power of the spirit would be there. One would have overpassed the present limitations of mind: mind would become a seeing of the light of Truth, will a force and power of the Truth, Life a progressive fulfilment of the Truth, the body itself a conscious vessel of the Truth and part of the means of its self-effectuation and a form of its self-aware existence. It would be at least some initiation of this Truth-consciousness, some first figure and action of it that must be reached and enter into a first operation if there is to be a divine life or any full manifestation of a spiritualised consciousness in the world of Matter. Or, at the very least, such a Truth-consciousness must be in communication with our own mind and life and body, descend into touch with it, control its seeing and action, impel its motives, take hold of its forces and

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shape their direction and purpose. All touched by it might not be able to embody it fully, but each would give some form to it according to his spiritual temperament, inner capacity, the line of his evolution in Nature: he would reach securely the perfection of which he was immediately capable and he would be on the road to the full possession of the truth of the Spirit and of the truth of Nature.

In the workings of such a Truth-consciousness there would be a certain conscious seeing and willing automatism of the steps of its truth which would replace the infallible automatism of the inconscient or seemingly inconscient Force that has brought out of an apparent Void the miracle of an ordered universe and this could create a new order of the manifestation of the Being in which a perfect perfection would become possible, even a supreme and total perfection would appear in the vistas of an ultimate possibility. If we could draw down this power into the material world, our agelong dreams of human perfectibility, individual perfection, the perfectibility of the race, of society, inner mastery over self and a complete mastery, governance and utilisation of the forces of Nature could see at long last a prospect of total achievement. This complete human self-fulfilment might well pass beyond limitations and be transformed into the character of a divine life. Matter after taking into itself and manifesting the power of life and the light of mind would draw down into it the superior or supreme power and light of the spirit and in an earthly body shed its parts of inconscience and become a perfectly conscious frame of the spirit. A secure completeness and stability of the health and strength of its physical tenement could be maintained by the will and force of this inhabitant; all the natural capacities of the physical frame, all powers

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of the physical consciousness would reach their utmost extension and be there at command and sure of their flawless action. As an instrument the body would acquire a fullness of capacity, a totality of fitness for all uses which the inhabitant would demand of it far beyond anything now possible. Even it could become a revealing vessel of a supreme beauty and bliss,—casting the beauty of the light of the spirit suffusing and radiating from it as a lamp reflects and diffuses the luminosity of its indwelling flame, carrying in itself the beatitude of the spirit, its joy of the seeing mind, its joy of life and spiritual happiness, the joy of Matter released into a spiritual consciousness and thrilled with a constant ecstasy. This would be the total perfection of the spiritualised body.

All this might not come all at once, though such a sudden illumination might be possible if a divine Power and Light and Ananda could take their stand on the summit of our being and send down their force into the mind and life and body illumining and remoulding the cells, awaking consciousness in all the frame. But the way would be open and the consummation of all that is possible in the individual could progressively take place. The physical also would have its share in that consummation of the whole.

There would always remain vistas beyond as the infinite Spirit took up towards higher heights and larger breadths the evolving Nature, in the movement of the liberated being towards the possession of the supreme Reality, the supreme existence, consciousness, beatitude. But of this it would be premature to speak: what has been written is perhaps as much as the human mind as it is now constituted can venture to look forward to and the enlightened thought understand in some measure. These consequences of the

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Truth-consciousness descending and laying its hold upon Matter would be a sufficient justification of the evolutionary labour. In this upward all-uplifting sweep of the Spirit there could be a simultaneous or consecutive downward sweep of the triumph of a spiritualised Nature all-including, all-transmuting and in it there could occur a glorifying change of Matter and the physical consciousness and physical form and functioning of which we could speak as not only the total but the supreme perfection of the body.

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II. THE DIVINE BODY

A DIVINE life in a divine body is the formula of the ideal that we envisage. But what will be the divine body? What will be the nature of this body, its structure, the principle of its activity, the perfection that distinguishes it from the limited and imperfect physicality within which we are now bound? What will be the conditions and operations of its life still physical in its base upon the earth by which it can be known as divine?

If it is to be the product of an evolution, and it is so that we must envisage it, an evolution out of our human imperfection and ignorance into a greater truth of spirit and nature, by what process or stages can it grow into manifestation or rapidly arrive? The process of the evolution upon earth has been slow and tardy—what principle must intervene if there is to be a transformation, a progressive or sudden change?

It is indeed as a result of our evolution that we arrive at the possibility of this transformation. As Nature has evolved beyond Matter and manifested Life, beyond Life and manifested Mind, so she must evolve beyond Mind and manifest a consciousness and power of our existence free from the imperfection and limitation of our mental existence, a supramental or truth-consciousness and able to develop the power and perfection of the spirit. Here a slow and tardy change need no longer be the law or manner of our evolution; it will be only so to a greater or less extent so long as a mental ignorance clings and hampers our ascent; but once we have grown into the truth-consciousness its

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power of spiritual truth of being will determine all. Into that truth we shall be freed and it will transform mind and life and body. Light and bliss and beauty and a perfection of the spontaneous right action of all the being are there as native powers of the supramental truth-consciousness and these will in their very nature transform mind and life and body even here upon earth into a manifestation of the truth-conscious spirit. The obscurations of earth will not prevail against the supramental truth-consciousness, for even into the earth it can bring enough of the omniscient light and omnipotent force of the spirit to conquer. All may not open to the fullness of its light and power, but whatever does open must to that extent undergo the change. That will be the principle of transformation.

It might be that a psychological change, a mastery of the nature by the soul, a transformation of the mind into a principle of light, of the life-force into power and purity would be the first approach, the first attempt to solve the problem, to escape beyond the merely human formula and establish something that could be called a divine life upon earth, a first sketch of supermanhood, of a supramental living in the circumstances of the earth-nature. But this could not be the complete and radical change needed; it would not be the total transformation, the fullness of a divine life in a divine body. There would be a body still human and indeed animal in its origin and fundamental character and this would impose its own inevitable limitations on the higher parts of the embodied being. As limitation by ignorance and error is the fundamental defect of an untransformed mind, as limitation by the imperfect impulses and strainings and wants of desire are the defects of an untransformed life-force, so also imperfection of the

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potentialities of the physical action, an imperfection, a limitation in the response of its half-consciousness to the demands made upon it and the grossness and stains of its original animality would be the defects of an untransformed or an imperfectly transformed body. These could not but hamper and even pull down towards themselves the action of the higher parts of the nature. A transformation of the body must be the condition for a total transformation of the nature.

It might be also that the transformation might take place by stages; there are powers of the nature still belonging to the mental region which are yet potentialities of a growing gnosis lifted beyond our human mentality and partaking of the light and power of the Divine and an ascent through these planes, a descent of them into the mental being might seem to be the natural evolutionary course. But in practice it might be found that these intermediate levels would not be sufficient for the total transformation since, being themselves illumined potentialities of mental being not yet supramental in the full sense of the word, they could bring down to the mind only a partial divinity or raise the mind towards that but not effectuate its elevation into the complete supramentality of the truth-consciousness. Still these levels might become stages of the ascent which some would reach and pause there while others went higher and could reach and live on superior strata of a semi-divine existence. It is not to be supposed that all humanity would rise in a block into the supermind; at first those only might attain to the highest or some intermediate height of the ascent whose inner evolution has fitted them for so great a change or who are raised by the direct touch of the Divine into its perfect light and power and bliss. The large mass

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of human beings might still remain for long content with a normal or only a partially illumined and uplifted human nature. But this would be itself a sufficiently radical change and initial transformation of earth-life; for the way would be open to all who have the will to rise, the supramental influence of the truth-consciousness would touch the earth-life and influence even its untransformed mass and a hope would be there and a promise eventually available to all which now only the few can share in or realise.

In any case these would be beginnings only and could not constitute the fullness of the divine life upon earth; it would be a new orientation of the earthly life but not the consummation of its change. For that there must be the sovereign reign of a supramental truth-consciousness to which all other forms of life would be subordinated and depend upon it as the master principle and supreme power to which they could look up as the goal, profit by its influences, be moved and upraised by something of its illumination and penetrating force. Especially, as the human body had to come into existence with its modification of the previous animal form and its erect figure of a new power of life and its expressive movements and activities serviceable and necessary to the principle of mind and the life of a mental being, so too a body must be developed with new powers, activities or degrees of a divine action expressive of a truth-conscious being and proper to a supramental consciousness and manifesting a conscious spirit. While the capacity for taking up and sublimating all the activities of the earth-life capable of being spiritualised must be there, a transcendence of the original animality and the actions incurably tainted by it or at least some saving transformation of them, some spiritualising or psychicising

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of the consciousness and motives animating them and the shedding of whatever could not be so transformed, even a change of what might be called its instrumental structure, its functioning and organisation, a complete and hitherto unprecedented control of these things must be the consequence or incidental to this total change. These things have been already to some extent illustrated in the lives of many who have become possessed of spiritual powers but as something exceptional and occasional, the casual or incomplete manifestation of an acquired capacity rather than the organisation of a new consciousness, a new life and a new nature. How far can such physical transformation be carried, what are the limits within which it must remain to be consistent with life upon earth and without carrying that life beyond the earthly sphere or pushing it towards the supraterrestrial existence? The supramental consciousness is not a fixed quantity but a power which passes to higher and higher levels of possibility until it reaches supreme consummations of spiritual existence fulfilling supermind as supermind fulfils the ranges of spiritual consciousness that are pushing towards it from the human or mental level. In this progression the body also may reach a more perfect form and a higher range of its expressive powers, become a more and more perfect vessel of divinity.

* * *

This destiny of the body has rarely in the past been envisaged or else not for the body here upon earth; such forms would rather be imagined or visioned as the privilege of celestial beings and not possible as the physical residence of

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a soul still bound to terrestrial nature. The Vaishnavas have spoken of a spiritualised conscious body, *chinmaya deha*; there has been the conception of a radiant or luminous body, which might be the Vedic *jyotirmaya deha*. A light has been seen by some radiating from the bodies of highly developed spiritual persons, even extending to the emission of an enveloping aura and there has been recorded an initial phenomenon of this kind in the life of so great a spiritual personality as Ramakrishna. But these things have been either conceptual only or rare and occasional and for the most part the body has not been regarded as possessed of spiritual possibility or capable of transformation. It has been spoken of as the means of effectuation of the dharma and dharma here includes all high purposes, achievements and ideals of life not excluding the spiritual change: but it is an instrument that must be dropped when its work is done and though there may be and must be spiritual realisation while yet in the body, it can only come to its full fruition after the abandonment of the physical frame. More ordinarily in the spiritual tradition the body has been regarded as an obstacle, incapable of spiritualisation or transmutation and a heavy weight holding the soul to earthly nature and preventing its ascent either to spiritual fulfilment in the Supreme or to the dissolution of its individual being in the Supreme. But while this conception of the role of the body in our destiny is suitable enough for a sadhana that sees earth only as a field of the ignorance and earth-life as a preparation for a saving withdrawal from life which is the indispensable condition for spiritual liberation, it is insufficient for a sadhana which conceives of a divine life upon earth and liberation of earth-nature itself as part of a total purpose of the embodiment of the spirit here. If a

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a total transformation of the being is our aim, a transformation of the body must be an indispensable part of it; without that no full divine life on earth is possible.

It is the past evolution of the body and especially its animal nature and animal history which seems to stand in the way of this consummation. The body, as we have seen, is an offspring and creation of the Inconscient, itself inconscient or only half-conscious; it began as a form of unconscious Matter, developed life and from a material object became a living growth, developed mind and from the subconsciousness of the plant and the initial rudimentary mind or incomplete intelligence of the animal developed the intellectual mind and more complete intelligence of man and now serves as the physical base, container and instrumental means of our total spiritual endeavour. Its animal character and its gross limitations stand indeed as an obstacle to our spiritual perfection; but the fact that it has developed a soul and is capable of serving it as a means may indicate that it is capable of further development and may become a shrine and expression of the spirit, reveal a secret spirituality of Matter, become entirely and not only half-conscious, reach a certain oneness with the spirit. This much it must do, so far at least it must transcend its original earth-nature, if it is to be the complete instrument of the divine life and no longer an obstacle.

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Still the inconveniences of the animal body and its animal nature and impulses and the limitations of the human body at its best are there in the beginning and persist always so long as there is not the full and fundamental liberation and

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its inconscience or half conscience and its binding of the soul and mind and life-force to Matter, to materiality of all kinds, to the call of the unregenerated earth-nature are there and constantly oppose the call of the spirit and circumscribe the climb to higher things. To the physical being it brings a bondage to the material instruments, to the brain and heart and senses, wed to materiality and materialism of all kinds, to the bodily mechanism and its needs and obligations, to the imperative need of food and the preoccupation with the means of getting it and storing it as one of the besetting interests of life, to fatigue and sleep, to the satisfaction of bodily desire. The life-force in man also is tied down to these small things; it has to limit the scope of its larger ambitions and longings, its drive to rise beyond the pull of earth and follow the heavenlier intuitions of its psychic parts, the heart's ideal and the soul's yearnings. On the mind the body imposes the boundaries of the physical being and the physical life and the sense of the sole complete reality of physical things with the rest as a sort of brilliant fireworks of the imagination, of lights and glories that can only have their full play in heavens beyond, on higher planes of existence, but not here; it afflicts the idea and aspiration with the burden of doubt, the evidence of the subtle senses and the intuition with uncertainty and the vast field of supraphysical consciousness and experience with the imputation of unreality and clamps down to its earth-roots the growth of the spirit from its original limiting humanity into the supramental truth and the divine nature. These obstacles can be overcome, the denials and resistance of the body surmounted, its transformation is possible. Even the inconscient and animal part of us can be illumined and made capable

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of manifesting the god-nature even as our mental humanity can be made to manifest the super humanity of the supramental truth-consciousness and the divinity of what is now superconscious to us and the total transformation made a reality here. But for this the obligations and compulsions of its animality must cease to be obligatory and a purification of its materiality effected by which that very materiality can be turned into a material solidity of the manifestation of the divine nature. For nothing essential must be left out in the totality of the earth-change; Matter itself can be turned into a means of revelation of the spiritual reality, the Divine.

The difficulty is dual, psychological and corporeal: the first is the effect of the unregenerated animality upon the life especially by the insistence of the body's gross instincts, impulses, desires; the second is the outcome of our corporeal structure and organic instrumentation imposing its restrictions on the dynamism of the higher divine nature. The first of these two difficulties is easier to deal with and conquer; for here the will can intervene and impose on the body the power of the higher nature. Certain of these impulses and instincts of the body have been found especially harmful by the spiritual aspirant and weighed considerably in favour of an ascetic rejection of the body. Sex and sexuality and all that springs from sex and testifies to its existence had to be banned and discarded from the spiritual life, and this, though difficult, is not at all impossible and can be made a cardinal condition for the spiritual seeker. This is natural and unescapable in all ascetic practice and the satisfaction of this condition, though not easy at first to fulfil, becomes after a time quite feasible; the overcoming of the sex-instinct and impulse is indeed binding on all

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who would attain to self-mastery and lead the spiritual life. A total mastery over it is essential for all spiritual seekers, the eradication of it for the complete ascetic. This much has to be recognised and not diminished in its obligatory importance and its principle.

But all recognition of the sex principle, as apart from the gross physical indulgence of the sex-impulse, could not be excluded from a divine life upon earth; it is there in life, plays a large part and has to be dealt with, it cannot simply be ignored, merely suppressed or held down or put away out of sight. In the first place, it is in one of its aspects a cosmic and even a divine principle: it takes the spiritual form of the Ishwara and the Shakti and without it there could be no world-creation or manifestation of the world-principle of Purusha and Prakriti which are both necessary for the creation, necessary too in their association and interchange for the play of its psychological working and in their manifestation as soul and Nature fundamental to the whole process of the Lila. In the divine life itself an incarnation or at least in some form a presence of the two powers or their initiating influence through their embodiments or representatives would be indispensable for making the new creation possible. In its human action on the mental and vital level sex is not altogether an undivine principle; it has its nobler aspects and idealities and it has to be seen in what way and to what extent these can be admitted into the new and larger life. All gross animal indulgence of sex desire and impulse would have to be eliminated; it could only continue among those who are not ready for the higher life or not yet ready for a complete spiritual living. In all who aspired to it but could not yet take it up in its fullness sex will have to be refined, submit to the spiri-

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tual or psychic impulse and a control by the higher mind and the higher vital and shed all its lighter, frivolous or degraded forms and feel the touch of the purity of the ideal. Love would remain, all forms of the pure truth of love in higher and higher steps till it realised its highest nature, widened into universal love, merged into the love of the Divine. The love of man and woman would also undergo that elevation and consummation; for all that can feel a touch of the ideal and the spiritual must follow the way of ascent till it reaches the divine Reality. The body and its activities must be accepted as part of the divine life and pass under this law; but, as in the other evolutionary transitions, what cannot accept the law of the divine life cannot be accepted and must fall away from the ascending nature.

Another difficulty that the transformation of the body has to face is its dependence for its very existence upon food and here too are involved the gross physical instincts, impulses, desires that are associated with this difficult factor, the essential cravings of the palate, the greed of food and animal gluttony of the belly, the coarsening of the mind when it grovels in the mud of sense, obeys a servitude to its mere animal part and hugs its bondage to Matter. The higher human in us seeks refuge in a temperate moderation, in abstemiousness and abstinence or in carelessness about the body and its wants and in an absorption in higher things. The spiritual seeker often, like the Jain ascetics, seeks refuge in long and frequent fasts which lift him temporarily at least out of the clutch of the body's demands and help him to feel in himself a pure vacancy of the wide rooms of the spirit. But all this is not liberation and the question may be raised whether, not only at first but always, the divine life also must submit to this necessity. But it

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could only deliver itself from it altogether if it could find out the way so to draw upon the universal energy that the energy would sustain not only the vital parts of our physicality but its constituent matter with no need of aid for sustenance from any outside substance of Matter. It is indeed possible even while fasting for very long periods to maintain the full energies and activities of the soul and mind and life, even those of the body, to remain wakeful but concentrated in Yoga all the time, or to think deeply and write day and night, to dispense with sleep, to walk eight hours a day, maintaining all these activities separately or together and not feel any loss of strength, any fatigue, any kind of failure or decadence. At the end of the fast one can even resume at once taking the normal or even a greater than the normal amount of nourishment without any transition or precaution such as medical science enjoins, as if both the complete fasting and the feasting were natural conditions, alternating by an immediate and easy passage from one to the other, of a body already trained by a sort of initial transformation to be an instrument of the powers and activities of Yoga. But one thing one does not escape and that is the wasting of the material tissues of the body, its flesh and substance. Conceivably, if a practicable way and means could only be found, this last invincible obstacle too might be overcome and the body maintained by an interchange of its forces with the forces of material Nature, giving to her her need from the individual and taking from her directly the sustaining energies of her universal existence. Conceivably, one might rediscover and re-establish at the summit of the evolution of life the phenomenon we see at its base, the power to draw from all around it the means of sustenance and self-

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renewal. Or else the evolved being might acquire the greater power to draw down those means from above rather than draw them up or pull them in from the environment around, all about it and below it. But until something like this is achieved or made possible we have to go back to food and the established material forces of Nature.

In fact we do, however unconsciously, draw constantly upon the universal energy, the force in Matter to replenish our material existence and the mental, vital and other potencies in the body: we do it directly in the invisible processes of interchange constantly kept up by Nature and by special means devised by her; breathing is one of these, sleep also and repose. But as her basic means for maintaining and renewing the gross physical body and its workings and inner potencies Nature has selected the taking in of outside matter in the shape of food, its digestion, assimilation of what is assimilable and elimination of what cannot or ought not to be assimilated, this by itself is sufficient for mere maintenance, but for assuring health and strength in the body so maintained it has added the impulse towards physical exercise and play of many kinds, ways for the expenditure and renewal of energy, the choice or the necessity of manifold action and labour. In the new life, in its beginnings at least, it would not be necessary or advisable to make any call for an extreme or precipitate rejection of the need of food or the established natural method for the maintenance of the still imperfectly transformed body. If or when these things have to be transcended it must come as a result of the awakened will of the spirit, a will also in Matter itself, an imperative evolutionary urge, an act of the creative transmutations of Time or a descent from the transcendence. Meanwhile the drawing

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in of the universal energy by a conscious action of the higher powers of the being from around or from above, by a call to what is still to us a transcending consciousness or by an invasion or descent from the Transcendence itself may well become an occasional, a frequent or a constant phenomenon and even reduce the part played by food and its need to an incidence no longer preoccupying, a necessity minor and less and less imperative. Meanwhile food and the ordinary process of Nature can be accepted although its use has to be liberated from attachment and desire and the grosser undiscriminating appetites and clutch at the pleasures of the flesh which is the way of the Ignorance; the physical processes have to be subtilised and the grossest may have to be eliminated and new processes found or new instrumentalities emerge. So long as it is accepted a refined pleasure in it may be permitted and even a desireless Ananda of taste take the place of the physical relish and the human selection by likings and dislikings which is our present imperfect response to what is offered to us by Nature. It must be remembered that for the divine life on earth earth and Matter have not to be and cannot be rejected but have only to be sublimated and to reveal in themselves the possibilities of the spirit, serve the spirit's highest uses and be transformed into instruments of a greater living.

The divine life must always be actuated by the push towards perfection; a perfection of the joy of life is part and an essential part of it, the body's delight in things and the body's joy of life are not excluded from it; they too have to be made perfect. A large totality is the very nature of this new and growing way of existence, a fullness of the possibilities of the mind transmuted into a thing of light, of the life converted into a force of spiritual power and

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joy, of the body transformed into an instrument of a divine action, divine knowledge, divine bliss. All can be taken into its scope that is capable of transforming itself, all that can be an instrument, a vessel, an opportunity for the expression of this totality of the self-manifesting Spirit.

* * *

There is one problem raised by sex for those who would reject in toto the obligations imposed by the animality of the body and put forward by it as an insistent opposition in the way of the aspirant to a higher life: it is the necessity of the prolongation of the race for which the sex activity is the only means already provided by Nature for living beings and inevitably imposed upon the race. It is not indeed necessary for the individual seeker after a divine life to take up this problem or even for a group who do not seek after it for themselves alone but desire a wide acceptance of it by mankind as at least an ideal. There will always be the multitude who do not concern themselves with it or are not ready for its complete practice and to these can be left the care for the prolongation of the race. The number of those who lead the divine life can be maintained and increased as the ideal extends itself, by the voluntary adhesion of those who are touched by the aspiration and there need be no resort to physical means for this purpose, no deviation from the rule of a strict sexual abstinence. But yet there may be circumstances in which from another standpoint, a voluntary creation of bodies for souls that seek to enter the earth-life to help in the creation and extension of the divine life upon earth might be found to be desirable. Then the necessity of a physical procreation

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for this purpose could only be avoided if new means of a supraphysical kind were evolved and made available. A development of this kind must necessarily belong to what is now considered as the sphere of the occult and the use of concealed powers of action or creation not known or possessed by the common mind of the race. Occultism means rightly the use of the higher powers of our nature, soul, mind, life-force and the faculties of the subtle physical consciousness to bring about results on their own or on the the material plane by some pressure of their own secret law and its potentialities, for manifestation and result in human or earthly mind and life and body or in objects and events in the world of Matter. A discovery or an extension of these little known or yet undeveloped powers is now envisaged by some well-known thinkers as a next step to be taken by mankind in its immediate evolution; the kind of creation spoken of has not been included among these developments, but it could well be considered as one of the new possibilities. Even physical science is trying to find physical means for passing beyond the ordinary instrumentation or procedure of Nature in this matter of propagation or the renewal of the physical life-force in human or animal beings; but the resort to occult means and the intervention of subtle physical processes, if it could be made possible, would be a greater way which could avoid the limitations, degradations, incompleteness and heavy imperfection of the means and results solely available to the law of material force. In India there has been always from the earliest times a widely spread belief in the possibility and reality of the use of these powers by men with an advanced knowledge of these secret things or with a developed spiritual knowledge and experience and dynamic force and

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even, in the Tantras, an organised system of their method and practice. The intervention of the Yogi in bringing about a desired birth of offspring is also generally believed in and often appealed to and the bestowal on the child so obtained of a spiritual attainment or destiny by his will or his blessing is sometimes asked for and such a result is recorded not only in the tradition of the past but maintained by the witness of the present. But there is here still the necessity of a resort to the normal means of propagation and the gross method of physical Nature. A purely occult method, a resort to supraphysical processes acting by supraphysical means for a physical result would have to be possible if we are to avoid this necessity: the resort to the sex impulse and its animal process could not be transcended otherwise. If there is some reality in the phenomenon of materialisation and dematerialisation claimed to be possible by occultists and evidenced by occurrences many of us have witnessed, a method of this kind would not be out of the range of possibility. For in the theory of the occultists and in the gradation of the ranges and planes of our being which Yoga-knowledge outlines for us there is not only a subtle physical force but a subtle physical Matter intervening between life and gross Matter and to create in this subtle physical substance and precipitate the forms thus made into our grosser materiality is feasible. It should be possible and it is believed to be possible for an object formed in this subtle physical substance to make a transit from its subtlety into the state of gross Matter directly by the intervention of an occult force and process whether with or even without the assistance or intervention of some gross material procedure. A soul wishing to enter into a body or form for itself a body and take part in a divine life upon earth might

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be assisted to do so or even provided with such a form by this method of direct transmutation without passing through birth by the sex process or undergoing any degradation or any of the heavy limitations in the growth and development of its mind and material body inevitable to our present way of existence. It might then assume at once the structure and greater powers and functionings of the truly divine material body which must one day emerge in a progressive evolution to a totally transformed existence both of life and form in a divinised earth-nature.

But what would be the internal or external form and structure and what the instrumentation of this divine body? The material history of the development of the animal and human body has left it bound to a minutely constructed and elaborated system of organs and a precarious order of their functioning which can easily become a disorder, open to a general or local disorganisation, dependent on an easily disturbed nervous system and commanded by a brain whose vibrations are supposed to be mechanical and automatic and not under our conscious control. According to the materialist all this is a functioning of Matter alone whose fundamental reality is chemical. We have to suppose that the body is constructed by the agency of chemical elements building up atoms and molecules and cells and these again are the agents and only conductors at the basis of a complicated physical structure and instrumentation which is the sole mechanical cause of all our actions, thoughts, feelings, the soul a fiction and mind and life only a material and mechanical manifestation and appearance of this machine which is worked out and automatically driven with a figment of consciousness in it by the forces inherent in inconscient Matter. If that

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were the truth it is obvious that any divinisation or divine transformation of the body or of anything else would be nothing but an illusion, an imagination, a senseless and impossible chimera. But even if we suppose a soul, a conscious will at work in this body it could not arrive at a divine transformation if there were no radical change in the bodily instrument itself and in the organisation of its material workings. The transforming agent will be bound and stopped in its work by the physical organism's unalterable limitations and held up by the unmodified or imperfectly modified original animal in us. The possibility of the disorders, derangements, maladies native to these physical arrangements would still be there and could only be shut out by a constant vigilance or perpetual control obligatory on the corporeal instrument's spiritual inhabitant and master. This could not be called a truly divine body; for in a divine body an inherent freedom from all these things would be natural and perpetual; this freedom would be a normal and native truth of its being and therefore inevitable and unalterable. A radical transformation of the functioning and, it may well be, of the structure and certainly of the too mechanical and material impulse and driving forces of the bodily system would be imperative. What agency could we find which we could make the means of this all-important liberation and change? Something there is in us or something has to be developed, perhaps a central and still occult part of our being containing forces whose powers in our actual and present make-up are only a fraction of what could be, but if they became complete and dominant would be truly able to bring about with the help of the light and force of the soul and the supramental truth-consciousness the necessary physical transformation

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and its consequences. This might be found in the system of Chakras revealed by Tantric knowledge and accepted in the systems of Yoga, conscious centres and sources of all the dynamic powers of our being organising their action through the plexuses and arranged in an ascending series from the lowest physical to the highest mind centre and spiritual centre called the thousand-petalled lotus where ascending Nature, the Serpent Power of the Tantrics, meets the Brahman and is liberated into the Divine Being. These centres are closed or half-closed within us and have to be opened before their full potentiality can be manifested in our physical nature: but once they are opened and completely active, no limit can easily be set to the development of their potencies and the total transformation to be possible.

But what would be the result of the emergence of these forces and their liberated and diviner action on the body itself, what their dynamic connection with it and their transforming operation on the still existing animal nature and its animal impulses and gross material procedure? It might be held that the first necessary change would be the liberation of the mind, the life-force, the subtle physical agencies and the physical consciousness into a freer and a diviner activity, a many-dimensioned and unlimited operation of their consciousness, a large outbreak of higher powers and the sublimation of the bodily consciousness itself, of its instrumentation, capacity, capability for the manifestation of the soul in the world of Matter. The subtle senses now concealed in us might come forward into a free action and the material senses themselves become means or channels for the vision of what is now invisible to us or the discovery of things surrounding us but at present unseizable

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and held back from our knowledge. A firm check might be put on the impulses of the animal nature or they might be purified and subtilised so as to become assets and not liabilities and so transformed as to be parts and processes of a diviner life. But even these changes would still leave a residue of material processes keeping the old way and not amenable to the higher control and, if this could not be changed the rest of the transformation might itself be checked and incomplete. A total transformation of the body would demand a sufficient change of the most material part of the organism, its constitution, its processes and its set-up of nature.

Again, it might be thought that a full control would be sufficient, a knowledge and a vision of this organism and its unseen action and an effective control determining its operations according to the conscious will; this possibility has been affirmed as something already achieved and a part of the development of the inner powers in some. The cessation of the breathing while still the life of the body remained stable, the hermetic sealing up at will not only of the breath but of all the vital manifestations for long periods, the stoppage of the heart similarly at will while thought and speech and other mental workings continued unabated, these and other phenomena of the power of the will over the body are known and well-attested examples of this kind of mastery. But these are occasional or sporadic successes and do not amount to transformation; a total control is necessary and an established and customary and, indeed, a natural mastery. Even with that achieved something more fundamental might have to be demanded for the complete liberation and change into a divine body.

Again, it might be urged that the organic structure of the body no less than its basic outer form would have to be

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retained as a necessary material foundation for the retention of the earth-nature, the connection of the divine life with the life of earth and a continuance of the evolutionary process so as to prevent a breaking upward out of and away from it into a state of being which would properly belong to a higher plane and not to a terrestrial divine fulfilment. The prolonged existence of the animal itself in our nature, if sufficiently transformed to be an instrument of manifestation and not an obstacle would be necessary to preserve the continuity, the evolutionary total; it would be needed as the living vehicle, *vāhana*, of the emergent god in the material world where he would have to act and achieve the works and wonders of the new life. It is certain that a form of body making this connection and a bodily action containing the earth-dynamism and its fundamental activities must be there, but the connection should not be a bond or a confining limitation or a contradiction of the totality of the change. The maintenance of the present organism without any transformation of it would not but act as such a bond and confinement within the old nature. There would be a material base but it would be of the earth earthy, an old and not a new earth with a diviner psychological structure; for with that structure the old system would be out of harmony and it would be unable to serve its further evolution or even to uphold it as a base in Matter. It would bind part of the being, a lower part to an untransformed humanity and unchanged animal functioning and prevent its liberation into the superhumanity of the supramental nature. A change is then necessary here too, a necessary part of the total bodily transformation, which would divinise the whole man, at least in the ultimate result and not leave his evolution incomplete.

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This aim, it must be said, would be sufficiently served if the instrumentation of the centres and their forces reigned over all the activities of the nature with an entire domination of the body and made it both in its structural form and its organic workings a free channel and means of communication and a plastic instrument of cognition and dynamic action for all that they had to do in the material life, in the world of Matter. There would have to be a change in the operative processes of the material organs themselves and, it may well be, in their very constitution and their importance; they could not be allowed to impose their limitations imperatively on the new physical life. To begin with, they might become more clearly outer ends of the channels of communication and action, more serviceable for the psychological purposes of the inhabitant, less blindly material in their responses, more conscious of the act and aim of the inner movements and powers which use them and which they are wrongly supposed by the material man in us to generate and to use. The brain would be a channel of communication of the form of the thoughts and a battery of their insistence on the body and the outside world where they could then become effective directly, communicating themselves without physical means from mind to mind, producing with a similar directness effects on the thoughts, actions and lives of others or even upon material things. The heart would equally be a direct communicant and medium of interchange for the feelings and emotions thrown outward upon the world by the forces of the psychic centre. Heart could reply directly to heart, the life-force come to the help of other lives and answer their call in spite of strangeness and distance, many beings without any external communication thrill with the message and meet

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in the secret light from one divine centre. The will might control the organs that deal with food, safeguard automatically the health, eliminate greed and desire, substitute subtler processes or draw in strength and substance from the universal life-force so that the body could maintain for a long time its own strength and substance without loss or waste, remaining thus with no need of sustenance by material aliments, and yet continue a strenuous action with no fatigue or pause for sleep or repose. The soul's will or the mind's could act from higher sources upon the sex-centre and the sex organs so as to check firmly or even banish the grosser sexual impulse or stimulus and instead of serving an animal excitation or crude drive or desire turn their use to the storing, production and direction towards brain and heart and life-force of the essential energy, *ojas*, of which this region is the factory so as to support the works of the mind and soul and spirit and the higher life-powers and limit the expenditure of the energy on lower things. The soul, the psychic being, could more easily fill all with the light and turn the very matter of the body to higher uses for its own greater purpose.

This would be a first potent change, but not by any means all that is possible or desirable. For it may well be that the evolutionary urge would proceed to a change of the organs themselves in their material working and use and diminish greatly the need of their instrumentation and even of their existence. The centres in the subtle body, *sūkṣma śarīra*, of which one would become conscious and aware of all going on in it would pour their energies into material nerve and plexus and tissue and radiate them through the whole material body; all the physical life and its necessary activities in this new existence could be maintained and

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operated by these higher agencies in a freer and ampler way and by a less burdensome and restricting method. This might go so far that these organs might cease to be indispensable and even be felt as too obstructive: the central force might use them less and less and finally throw aside their use altogether. If that happened they might waste by atrophy, be reduced to an insignificant minimum or even disappear. The central force might substitute for them subtle organs of a very different character or, if anything material was needed, instruments that would be forms of dynamism or plastic transmitters rather than what we know as organs. This might well be part of a supreme total transformation of the body, though this too might not be final. To envisage such changes is to look far ahead and minds attached to the present form of things may be unable to give credence to their possibility. No such limits and no such impossibility of any necessary change can be imposed on the evolutionary urge. All has not to be fundamentally changed: on the contrary, all has to be preserved that is still needed in the totality, but all has to be perfected. Whatever is necessary for the evolutionary purpose for the increasing, enlarging, heightening of the consciousness, which seems to be its central will and aim here, or the progression of its enabling means and preserving environment has to be kept and furthered; but what has to be overpassed, whatever has no longer a use or is degraded, what has become unhelpful or retarding, can be discarded and dropped on the way. That has been evident in the history of the evolution of the body from its beginning in elementary forms to its most developed type, the human, there is no reason why this process should not intervene in the transition from the human into the divine body. For the manifestation or building of a

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divine body on earth there must be an initial transformation, the appearance of a new, a greater and more developed type, not a continuance with little modifications of the present physical form and its limited possibilities. What has to be preserved must indeed be preserved and that means whatever is necessary or thoroughly serviceable for the uses of the new life on earth; whatever is still needed and will serve its purpose but imperfect, will have to be retained but developed and perfected; whatever is no longer of use for new aims or is a disability must be thrown aside. The necessary forms and instrumentations of Matter must remain since it is in a world of Matter that the divine life has to manifest, but their materiality must be refined, uplifted, ennobled, illumined, since Matter and the world of Matter have increasingly to manifest the indwelling Spirit.

The new type, the divine body, must continue the already developed evolutionary form; there must be a continuation from the type Nature has all along been developing, a continuity from the human to the divine body, no breaking away to something unrecognisable but a high sequel to what has already been achieved and in part perfected. The human body has in it parts and instruments that have been sufficiently evolved to serve the divine life; these have to survive in their form, though they must be still further perfected, their limitations of range and use removed, their liability to defect and malady and impairment eliminated, their capacities of cognition and dynamic action carried beyond the present limits. New powers have to be acquired by the body which our present humanity could not hope to realise, could not even dream of or could only imagine. Much that can now only be known, worked out or created by the use of invented tools and machinery might be achieved

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by the new body in its own power or by the inhabitant spirit through its own direct spiritual force. The body itself might acquire new means and ranges of communication with other bodies, new processes of acquiring knowledge, a new aesthesis, new potencies of manipulation of itself and objects. It might not be impossible for it to possess or disclose means native to its own constitution, substance or natural instrumentation for making the far near and annulling distance, cognising what is now beyond the body's cognisance, acting where action is now out of its reach or its domain, developing subtleties and plasticities which could not be permitted under present conditions to the needed fixity of a material frame. These and other numerous potentialities might appear and the body become an instrument immeasurably superior to what we can now imagine as possible. There could be an evolution from a first apprehending truth-consciousness to the utmost heights of the ascending ranges of supermind and it may pass the borders of the supermind proper itself where it begins to shadow out, develop, delineate expressive forms of life touched by a supreme pure existence, consciousness and bliss which constitute the worlds of a highest truth of existence, dynamism of tapas, glory and sweetness of bliss, the absolute essence and pitch of the all-creating Ananda. The transformation of the physical being might follow this incessant line of progression and the divine body reflect or reproduce here in a divine life on the earth something of this highest greatness and glory of the self-manifesting Spirit.

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III. SUPERMIND AND THE LIFE DIVINE

A DIVINE life upon earth, the ideal we have placed before us, can only come about by a spiritual change of our being and a radical and fundamental change, an evolution or revolution of our nature. The embodied being upon earth would have to rise out of the domination over it of its veils of mind, life and body into the full consciousness and possession of its spiritual reality and its nature also would have to be lifted out of the consciousness and power of consciousness proper to mental, vital and physical being into the greater consciousness and greater power of being and the larger and freer life of the spirit. It would not lose these former veils but they would no longer be veils or imperfect expressions but true manifestations; they would be changed into states of light, powers of spiritual life, vehicles of a spiritual existence. But this again could not be if mind, life and body were not taken up and transformed by a state of being and a force of being superior to them, a power of Supermind as much above our incomplete mental nature as that is above the nature of animal life and animated Matter, as it is immeasurably above the mere material nature.

The Supermind is in its very essence a truth-consciousness, a consciousness always free from the Ignorance which is the foundation of our present natural or evolutionary existence and from which nature in us is trying to arrive at self-knowledge and world-knowledge and a right consciousness and the right use of our existence in the universe. The Supermind, because it is a truth-consciousness, has this knowledge inherent in it and this power of true existence;

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its course is straight and can go direct to its aim, its field is wide and can even be made illimitable. This is because its very nature is knowledge: it has not to acquire knowledge but possesses it in its own right; its steps are not from nescience or ignorance into some imperfect light, but from truth to greater truth, from right perception to deeper perception, from intuition to intuition, from illumination to utter and boundless luminousness, from growing widenesses to the utter vasts and to very infinitude. On its summits it possesses the divine omniscience and omnipotence, but even in an evolutionary movement of its own graded self-manifestation by which it would eventually reveal its own highest heights it must be in its very nature essentially free from ignorance and error: it starts from truth and light and moves always in truth and light. As its knowledge is always true, so too its will is always true; it does not fumble in its handling of things or stumble in its paces. In the Supermind feeling and emotion do not depart from their truth, make no slips or mistakes, do not swerve from the right and the real, cannot misuse beauty and delight or twist away from a divine rectitude. In the Supermind sense cannot mislead or deviate into the grossnesses which are here its natural imperfections and the cause of reproach, distrust and misuse by our ignorance. Even an incomplete statement made by the Supermind is a truth leading to a further truth, its incomplete action a step towards completeness. All the life and action and leading of the Supermind is guarded in its very nature from the falsehoods and uncertainties that are our lot; it moves in safety towards its perfection. Once the truth-consciousness was established here on its own sure foundation, the evolution of divine life would be a progress in felicity, a march through light to Ananda.

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Supermind is an eternal reality of the divine Being and the divine Nature. In its own plane it already and always exists and possesses its own essential law of being; it has not to be created or to emerge or evolve into existence out of involution in Matter or out of non-existence, as it might seem to the view of mind which itself seems to its own view to have so emerged from life and Matter or to have evolved out of an involution in life and Matter. The nature of Supermind is always the same, a being of knowledge, proceeding from truth to truth, creating or rather manifesting what has to be manifested by the power of a pre-existent knowledge, not by hazard but by a self-existent destiny in the being itself, a necessity of the thing in itself and therefore inevitable. Its manifestation of the divine life will also be inevitable; its own life on its own plane is divine and, if Supermind descends upon the earth, it will bring necessarily the divine life with it and establish it here.

Supermind is the grade of existence beyond mind, life and Matter and, as mind, life and Matter have manifested on the earth, so too must Supermind in the inevitable course of things manifest in this world of Matter. In fact, a supermind is already here but it is involved, concealed behind this manifest mind, life and Matter and not yet acting overtly or in its own power: if it acts, it is through these inferior powers and modified by their characters and so not yet recognisable. It is only by the approach and arrival of the descending Supermind that it can be liberated upon earth and reveal itself in the action of our material, vital and mental parts so that these lower powers can become portions of a total divinised activity of our whole being: it is that that will bring to us a completely realised divinity or the divine life. It is indeed so that life and mind involved in Matter have

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realised themselves here; for only what is involved can evolve, otherwise there could be no emergence.

The manifestation of a supramental truth-consciousness is therefore the capital reality that will make the divine life possible. It is when all the movements of thought, impulse and action are governed and directed by a self-existent and luminously automatic truth-consciousness and our whole nature comes to be constituted by it and made of its stuff that the life divine will be complete and absolute. Even as it is, in reality though not in the appearance of things, it is a secret self-existent knowledge and truth that is working to manifest itself in the creation here. The Divine is already there immanent within us, ourselves are that in our inmost reality and it is this reality that we have to manifest; it is that which constitutes the urge towards the divine living and makes necessary the creation of the life divine even in this material existence.

A manifestation of the Supermind and its truth-consciousness is then inevitable; it must happen in this world sooner or later. But it has two aspects, a descent from above, an ascent from below, a self-revelation of the Spirit, an evolution in Nature. The ascent is necessarily an effort, a working of Nature, an urge or nisus on her side to raise her lower parts by an evolutionary or revolutionary change, conversion or transformation into the divine reality and it may happen by a process and progress or by a rapid miracle. The descent or self-revelation of the Spirit is an act of the supreme Reality from above which makes the realisation possible and it can appear either as the divine aid which brings about the fulfilment of the progress and process or as the sanction of the miracle. Evolution, as we see it in this world, is a slow and difficult process and, indeed, needs

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usually ages to reach abiding results; but this is because it is in its nature an emergence from inconscient beginnings, a start from nescience and a working in the ignorance of natural beings by what seems to be an unconscious force. There can be, on the contrary, an evolution in the light and no longer in the darkness, in which the evolving being is a conscious participant and cooperator, and this is precisely what must take place here. Even in the effort and progress from the Ignorance to Knowledge this must be in part if not wholly the endeavour to be made on the heights of the nature and it must be wholly that in the final movement towards the spiritual change, realisation, transformation. It must be still more so when there is a transition across the dividing line between the Ignorance and the Knowledge and the evolution is from knowledge to greater knowledge, from consciousness to greater consciousness, from being to greater being. There is then no longer any necessity for the slow pace of the ordinary evolution; there can be rapid conversion, quick transformation after transformation, what would seem to our normal present mind, a succession of miracles. An evolution on the supramental levels could well be of that nature; it could be equally, if the being so chose, a more leisurely passage of one supramental state or condition of things to something beyond but still supramental from level to divine level, a building up of divine gradations, a free growth to the supreme Supermind or beyond it to yet undreamed levels of being, consciousness and Ananda.

The supramental knowledge, the truth-consciousness of the Supermind is in itself one and total: even when there is a voluntary limitation of the knowledge or what might seem to be a partial manifestation, it is so voluntarily; the

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limitation does not proceed from or result in any kind of ignorance, it is not a denial or withholding of knowledge, for all the rest of the truth that is not brought into expression, is implicit there. Above all, there are no contradictions: whatever would seem to be opposites to the mind, here carry in themselves their own right relation and reconciling agreement,—if indeed any reconciliation were needed, for the harmony of these apparent opposites is complete. The mind tends to put the personal and the impersonal in face of each other as if they were two contraries, but the Supermind sees and realises them as, at the lowest, complements and mutually fulfilling powers of the single Reality and, more characteristically, as interfused and inseparable and themselves that single Reality. The Person has his aspect of impersonality inseparable from himself without which he could not be what he is or could not be his whole self: the Impersonal is in its truth not a state of existence, a state of consciousness and a state of bliss, but a Being self-existent, conscious of self, full of his own self-existent bliss, bliss the very substance of his being, —so, the one single and illimitable Person, Purusha. In the Supermind the finite does not cut up or limit the infinite, does not feel itself contrary to the infinite; but rather it feels its own infinity: the relative and temporal is not a contradiction of eternity but a right relation of its aspects, a native working or an imperishable feature of the eternal. Time there is only the eternal in extension and the eternal can be felt in the momentary. Thus the integral Divine is there in the Supermind and no theory of illusion or self-contradictory Maya need be thrust in to justify its way of existence. It will be obvious that an escape from life is not necessary for the Divine to find itself or its reality;

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it possesses that always whether in cosmic life or in its transcendent existence. The divine life cannot be a contradiction of the Divine or of the supreme reality; it is part of that reality, an aspect or expression of it and it can be nothing else. In life on the supramental plane all the Divine is possessed, and when the Supermind descends on earth, it must bring the Divine with it and make that full possession possible here.

The divine life will give to those who enter into it and possess it an increasing and finally a complete possession of the truth-consciousness and all that it carries in it; it will bring with it the realisation of the Divine in self and the Divine in Nature. All that is sought by the God-seeker will be fulfilled in his spirit and in his life as he moves towards spiritual perfection. He will become aware of the transcendent reality, possess in the self-experience the supreme existence, consciousness, bliss, be one with Sachchidananda. He will become one with cosmic being and universal Nature: he will contain the world in himself, in his own cosmic consciousness and feel himself one with all beings; he will see himself in all and all in himself, become united and identified with the Self which has become all existences. He will perceive the beauty of the All-Beautiful and the miracle of the All-Wonderful; he will enter in the end into the bliss of the Brahman and live abidingly in it and for all this he will not need to shun existence or plunge into the annihilation of the spiritual Person in some self-extinguishing Nirvana. As in the Self, so in Nature, he can realise the Divine. The nature of the Divine is Light and Power and Bliss; he can feel the divine Light and Power and Bliss above him and descending into him, filling every strand of his nature, every

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cell and atom of his being, flooding his soul and mind and life and body, surrounding him like an illimitable sea and filling the world, suffusing all his feeling and sense and experience, making all his life truly and utterly divine. This and all else that the spiritual consciousness can bring to him the divine life will give him when it reaches its utmost completeness and perfection and the supramental truth-consciousness is fulfilled in all himself; but even before that he can attain to something of it all, grow in it, live in it, once the Supermind has descended upon him and has the direction of his existence. All relations with the Divine will be his: the trinity of God-knowledge, divine works and devotion to God will open within him and move towards an utter self-giving and surrender of his whole being and nature. He will live in God and with God, possess God, as it is said, even plunge in him forgetting all separate personality, but not losing it in self-extinction. The love of God and all the sweetness of love will remain his, the bliss of contact as well as the bliss of oneness and the bliss of difference in oneness. All the infinite ranges of experience of the Infinite will be his and all the joy of the finite in the embrace of the Infinite.

The descent of the Supermind will bring to one who receives it and is fulfilled in the truth-consciousness all the possibilities of the divine life. It will take up not only the whole characteristic experience which we recognise already as constituting the spiritual life but also all which we now exclude from that category but which is capable of divinisation, not excluding whatever of the earth-nature and the earth-life can be transformed by the touch of the Supermind and taken up into the manifested life of the

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Spirit. For a divine life on earth need not be a thing apart and exclusive having nothing to do with the common earthly existence: it will take up human being and human life, transform what can be transformed, spiritualise whatever can be spiritualised, cast its influence on the rest and effectuate either a radical or an uplifting change, bring about a deeper communion between the universal and the individual, invade the ideal with the spiritual truth of which it is a luminous shadow and help to uplift into or towards a greater and higher existence. Mind it will uplift towards a diviner light of thought and will, life towards deeper and truer emotion and action, towards a larger power of itself, towards high aims and motives. Whatever cannot yet be raised into its own full truth of being, it will bring nearer to that fullness; whatever is not ready even for that change, will still see the possibility open to it whenever its still incomplete evolution has made it ready for self-fulfilment. Even the body, if it can bear the touch of Supermind, will become more aware of its own truth, —for there is a body-consciousness that has its own instinctive truth and power of right condition and action, even a kind of unexpressed occult knowledge in the constitution of its cells and tissues which may one day become conscious and contribute to the transformation of the physical being. An awakening must come in the earth-nature and in the earth-consciousness which will be, if not the actual beginning, at least the effective preparation and the first steps of its evolution towards a new and diviner world order.

This would be the fulfilment of the divine life which the descent of Supermind and the working of the truth-consciousness taking hold of the whole nature of the living being would bring about in all who could open themselves to its

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power or influence. Even its first immediate effect would be on all who are capable the possibility of entering into the truth-consciousness and changing all the movements of the nature more and more into the movements of the supramental truth, truth of thought, truth of will, truth in the feelings, truth in the acts, true conditions of the whole being even to the body, eventually transformation, a divinising change. For those who could so open themselves and remain open, there would be no limitation to this development and even no fundamental difficulty; for all difficulties would be dissolved by the pressure of the supramental light and power from above pouring itself into the mind and the life-force and the body. But the result of the supramental descent need not be limited to those who could thus open themselves entirely and it need not be limited to the supramental change; there could also be a minor or secondary transformation of the mental being within a freed and perfected scope of the mental nature. In place of the human mind as it now is, a mind limited, imperfect, open at every moment to all kinds of deviation from the truth or missing of the truth, all kinds of error and openness even to the persuasions of a complete falsehood and perversion of the nature, a mind blinded and pulled down towards inconscience and ignorance, hardly arriving at knowledge, an intellect prone to interpret the higher knowledge in abstractions and indirect figures seizing and holding even the messages of the higher intuition with an uncertain and disputed grasp, there could emerge a true mind liberated and capable of the free and utmost perfection of itself and its instruments, a life governed by the free and illumined mind, a body responsive to the light and able to carry out all that the free mind and will could

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demand of it. This change might happen not only in the few, but extend and generalise itself in the race. This possibility, if fulfilled, would mean that the human dream of perfection, perfection of itself, of its purified and enlightened nature, of all its ways of action and living, would be no longer a dream but a truth that could be made real and humanity lifted out of the hold on it of inconscience and ignorance. The life of the mental being could be harmonised with the life of the Supermind which will then be the highest order above it and become even an extension and annexe of the truth-consciousness, a part and province of the divine life. It is obvious that if the Supermind is there and an order of supramental being is established as the leading principle in earth-nature, as mind is now the leading principle, but with a sureness, a complete government of the earthly existence, a capacity of transformation of all upon their level and within their natural boundaries of which the mind in its imperfection was not capable, an immense change of human life, even if it did not extend to transformation, would be inevitable.

It remains to consider what might be the obstacles in the way of this possibility, especially those offered by the nature of the earth-order and its function as a field of a graded evolution in which our humanity is a stage and, it might be argued, its very imperfection an evolutionary necessity. How far could or would Supermind by its presence and government of things overcome this difficulty while respecting the principle of gradation and whether it could not rectify the wrong and ignorant order imposed by the Ignorance and Inconscience and substitute for it a right gradation in which the perfection and divinisation would be possible. Certainly, the way for the individual

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would be open, whatever group of human beings aspire as united in an endeavour at a perfect and individual collective living or aspire to the divine life, would be assisted towards the attainment of its aspiration: that at least the Supermind would make its minimum consequence. But the greater possibility is also there and might even be offered to the whole of humanity. This, then, we have to consider, what would the descent of the Supermind mean for mankind and what would be its result or its promise for the whole life and evolutionary future and destiny of the human race?

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IV. SUPERMIND AND HUMANITY

WHAT then would be the consequence for humanity of the descent of Supermind into our earthly existence, its consequence for this race born into a world of ignorance and inconscience but capable of an upward evolution of its consciousness and an ascent into the light and power and bliss of a spiritual being and spiritual nature? The descent into the earth-life of so supreme a creative power as the Supermind and its truth-consciousness could not be merely a new feature or factor added to that life or put in its front but without any other importance or only a restricted importance carrying with it no result profoundly affecting the rest of earth-nature. Especially it could not fail to exercise an immense influence on mankind as a whole, even a radical change in the aspect and prospect of its existence here, even if this power had no other capital result on the material world in which it had come down to intervene. One cannot but conclude that the influence, the change made would be far reaching, even enormous: it would not only establish the Supermind and a supramental race of beings upon the earth, it could bring about an uplifting and transforming change in mind itself and as an inevitable consequence in the consciousness of man, the mental being and would equally bring about a radical and transforming change in the principles and forms of his living, his ways of action and the whole build and tenor of his life. It would certainly open to man the access to the supramental consciousness and the supramental life; for we must suppose that it is by such a transformation that a race of supramental

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beings would be created, even as the human race itself has arisen by a less radical but still a considerable uplifting and enlargement of consciousness and conversion of the body's instrumentation and its indwelling and evolving mental and spiritual capacities and powers out of a first animal stage. But even without any such complete transformation the truth-principle might so far replace the principle we see here of an original ignorance seeking for knowledge and arriving only at a partial knowledge that the human mind could become a power of light, of knowledge finding itself, not the denizen of a half-way twilight or a servant and helper of the ignorance, a purveyor of mingled truth and error. Mind might even become in man, what it is in its fundamental origin, a subordinate, limited and special action of the Supermind, a sufficiently luminous receptacle of truth, and at least all falsity in its works might cease.

It could at once be objected that this would alter the whole evolutionary order and its balance and leave an incurable gap in its completeness: there would be an unbridged gulf between man and the animal and no way for the evolutionary nisus to a journey over it in the progress of the consciousness from animality to divinity; for, some kind of divinity would be involved in the suggested metamorphosis. It might be contended that the true process of evolution is to add a new principle, degree or stage to the already existing order and not to make any alteration in any previously established feature. Man came into being but the animal remained the animal and made no progress towards the half-humanity: all slight modifications of consciousness, capacities or habits in domestic animals produced by the association with man or by his training of them are only slight alterations of the animal intelligence. Still less can

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the plants move towards animal consciousness or brute Matter become in the slightest degree, even subconsciously or half subconsciously, aware of itself or responsive or reactive. The fundamental distinctions remain and must remain unaltered in the cosmic order. But this objection presumes that the new humanity must be all of one level; there may well be gradations of consciousness in it which would bridge the distance between its least developed elements and the higher animals who, although they cannot pass into a semi-human kind, might still progress towards a higher animal intelligence: for, certain experiments show that these are not at all entirely unprogressive. These gradations would serve the purpose of the transition quite as well as the least developed humans in the present scale without leaving a gap so wide as to disturb the evolutionary order of the universe. A considerable saltus can, as it is, be observed separating the different orders, Matter and the plant, the plant and the lower animals, one species of animals and another, as well as that always existing and large enough between the highest animal and man. There would therefore be no incurable breach in the evolutionary order, no such distance between human mind and animal mind, between the new type of human being and the old animal level as could not be overleaped or would create an unbridgeable gulf for the most developed animal soul in its passage to the least developed type of the new humanity. A leap, a saltus, there would be, as there is now; but it would not be between animality and divinity, from animal mind to Supermind: it would be between a most highly developed animal mind turning towards human possibilities—for without that the passage from animal to man could not be achieved —and a human mind waking to the possibility, not yet the

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full achievement, of its own higher yet unattained capacities.

One result of the intervention of Supermind in the earth-nature, the descent of the supreme creative Truth-Power might well be a change in the law of evolution, its method and its arrangement: a larger element of the principle of evolution through knowledge might enter into the forces of the material universe. This might extend itself from a first beginning in the new creation and produce increasing effects in the order which is now wholly an evolution in the ignorance and indeed starts from the complete nescience of the Inconscient and proceeds towards what can be regarded even in its highest attainment of knowledge as a lesser ignorance, since it is more a representation than a direct and complete possession of knowledge. If man began to develop the powers and means of a higher knowledge in something like fullness, if the developing animal opened the door of his mentality to beginnings of conscious thought and even a rudimentary reason,—at his highest he is not so irrevocably far from that even now,—if the plant developed its first subconscient reactions and attained to some kind of primary nervous sensitiveness, if Matter which is a blind form of the Spirit, were to become more alive with the hidden power within it and to offer more readily the secret sense of things, the occult realities it covers, as for instance, the record of the past it always preserves even in its dumb inconscience or the working of its involved forces and invisible movements revealing veiled powers in material nature to a subtler generalised perception of the new human intelligence, this would be an immense change promising greater changes in the future, but it would mean only an uplifting and not a disturbance of the universal order. Evolution would itself evolve, but it would not be perturbed or founder.

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It is difficult for us to conceive in theory or admit as a practical possibility the transformation of the human mentality I have suggested as a change that would naturally take place under the lead of the supramental truth-consciousness, because our notions about mind are rooted in an experience of human mentality in a world which starts from inconscience and proceeds through a first almost complete nescience and a slowly lessening ignorance towards a high degree but always incomplete scope and imperfect method of only partially equipped knowledge which does not serve fully the needs of a consciousness always pushing towards its own still immeasurably distant absolute. The visible imperfections and limitations of mind in the present stage of its evolution here we take as part of its very nature; but in fact the boundaries in which it is still penned are only temporary limits and measures of its still incomplete evolutionary advance; its defects of methods and means are faults of its immaturity and not proper to the constitution of its being; its achievement although extraordinary under the hampering conditions of the mental being weighed down by its instrumentation in an earthly body is far below and not beyond what will be possible to it in its illumined future. For mind is not in its very nature an inventor of errors, a father of lies bound down to a capacity of falsehood, wedded to its own mistakes and the leader of a stumbling life as it too largely is at present owing to our human shortcomings: it is in its origin a principle of light, an instrument put forth from the Supermind and, though set to work within limits and even set to create limits, yet the limits are luminous borders for a special working, voluntary and purposive bounds, a service of the finite ever extending itself under the eye of infinity. It is this character of Mind that will

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reveal itself under the touch of Supermind and make human mentality an adjunct and a minor instrumentation of the supramental knowledge. It will even be possible for the mind no longer limited by the intellect to become capable of a sort of mental gnosis, a luminous reproduction of the Truth in a diminished working extending the power of the Light not only to its own but to lower levels of consciousness in their climb towards self-transcendence. Overmind, Intuition, Illumined Mind and what I have called Higher Mind, these and other levels of a spiritualised and liberated mentality, will be able to reflect in the uplifted human mind and its purified and exalted feeling and force of life and action something of their powers and prepare the ascent of the soul to their own plateaus and peaks of an ascending existence. This is essentially the change which can be contemplated as a result of the new evolutionary order and it would mean a considerable extension of the evolutionary field itself and will answer the question as to the result on humanity of the advent of Supermind into the earth-nature.

If mind in its origin from Supermind is itself a power of Supermind, a principle of Light and a power of Light or a force for Knowledge specialised in its action for a subordinate purpose, yet it assumes a different aspect when in the working out of this purpose it separates itself more and more from the supramental light, from the immediate power and supporting illumination of the supramental principle. It is as it departs more and more in this direction from its own highest truth that it becomes a creator or parent of ignorance and is or seems to be the highest power in a world of ignorance; it becomes itself subject to ignorance and seems only to arrive at a partial and imperfect knowledge. The reason of this decline is that it is used by the

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Supermind principally for the work of differentiation which is necessary if there is to be a creation and a universe. In the Supermind itself, in all its creation there is this differentiating power, the manifestation of the One in the Many and the Many in the One; but the One is never forgotten or lost in its multiplicity which always consciously depends upon and never takes precedence over the eternal oneness. In the mind, on the contrary, the differentiation, the multiplicity does take precedence and the conscious sense of the universal oneness is lost and the separated unit seems to exist for itself and by itself as a sufficient self-conscious integer or in inanimate objects as the inconscient integer. It should be noted, however, that a world or plane of mind need not be a reign of ignorance where falsity, error or nescience must have a place; it may be only a voluntary self-limitation of knowledge. It could be a world where all possibilities capable of being determined by mind could manifest themselves in the successions of Time and find a true form and field of their action, the expressive figure of themselves, their capacity of self-development, self-realisation of a kind, self-discovery. This is actually what we meet when we follow in psychic experience the line of descent by which the involution takes place which ends in Matter and the creation of the material universe. What we see here is not the planes or worlds of the descent in which mind and life can keep something of their truth and something of the light of the spirit, something of their true and real being; here we see an original inconscience and a struggle of life and mind and spirit to evolve out of the material inconscience and in a resultant ignorance to find themselves and grow towards their full capacity and highest existence. If mind succeeds

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in that endeavour there is no reason why it should not recover its true character and be once more a principle and power of Light and even in its own way aid in the workings of a true and complete knowledge. At its highest it might pass out of its limitations into the supramental truth and become part and function of the supramental knowledge or at the least serve for a minor work of differentiation in the consensus of that knowledge: in the lower degree below Supermind it might be a mental gnosis, a spiritual or spiritualised perception, feeling, activity, sense which could do the works of knowledge and not of ignorance. Even at a still lower level it could be an increasingly luminous passage leading from light to light, from truth to truth and no longer a circling in the mazes of half-truth and half-nescience. This would not be possible in a world where untransformed mind or human mind burdened with its hampering disabilities, as it now is, will still be the leader or the evolution's highest achievement, but with Supermind for the leading and dominant power this might well happen, and might even be regarded as one result and an almost inevitable result of its descent into the human world and its touch on the mind of humanity.

How far this would go, whether the whole of humanity would be touched or only a part of it ready for the change would depend on what was intended or possible in the continued order of the universe. If the old evolutionary principle and order must be preserved, then only a section of the race would pass onward, the rest would keep the old human position, level and function in the ascending order. But even so there must be a passage or bridge between the two levels or orders of being by which the evolution would make its transition from one to the other;

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the mind would there be capable of contact with and modification by the supramental truth and thus would be the means of the soul's passing on upward: there must be a status of mind capable of receiving and growing in the Light towards Supermind though not reaching it: through that, as even now happens in a lesser degree through a dimmer medium, the lustre of a greater truth would send down its rays for the liberation and uplift of the soul in the ignorance. Supermind is here veiled behind a curtain and, though not organised for its own characteristic action, it is the true cause of all creation here, the power for the growth of truth and knowledge and the ascension of the soul towards the hidden Reality. But in a world where Supermind has made its appearance, it could hardly be a separate factor isolated from the rest, it would inevitably not only create superman but change and uplift man. A total change of the mental principle, such as has been suggested, cannot be ruled out as impossible.

Mind, as we know it, has a power of consciousness quite distinct from Supermind, no longer a power devolved from it, connected with it and dependent upon it, but practically divorced from its luminous origin, is marked by several characteristics which we conceive to be the very signs of its nature: but some of these belong to Supermind also and the difference is in the way and scope of their action, not in their stuff or in their principle. The difference is that mind is not a power of whole knowledge and only when it begins to pass beyond itself, a power of direct knowledge: it receives rays of the truth but does not live in the sun: it sees as through glasses and its knowledge is coloured by its instruments, it cannot see with the naked eye or look straight at the sun. It is not possible for mind

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to take its stand in the solar centre or anywhere in the radiant body or even on the shining circumference of the orb of perfect truth and acquire or share in its privilege of infallible or absolute knowledge. It would be only if it had already drawn near to the light of Supermind that it could live anywhere near this sun in the full splendour of its rays, in something of the full and direct blaze of Truth and the human mind even at its highest is far from that, it can only live at most in a limited circle, in some narrow beginnings of a pure insight, a direct vision and it would take long for it, even in surpassing itself, to reach to an imitative and fragmentary reflection of a dream of the limited omniscience and omnipotence which is the privilege of a delegated divinity, of the god, of a demiurge. It is a power for creation, but either tentative and uncertain and succeeding by good chance or the favour of circumstance or else, if assured by some force of practical ability or genius, subject to flaw or pent within unescapable limits. Its highest knowledge is often abstract, lacking in a concrete grasp; it has to use expedients and unsure means of arrival to rely upon reasoning, argumentation and debate, inferences, divinations, set methods of inductive or deductive logic, succeeding only if it is given correct and complete data and even then liable to reach on the same data different results and varying consequences; it has to use means and accept results of a method which is hazardous even when making a claim to certitude and of which there would be no need if it had a direct or a supra-intellectual knowledge. It is not necessary to push the description further; all this is the very nature of our terrestrial ignorance and its shadow hangs on even to the thought and vision of the sage and the seer and can be escaped only if the

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principle of a truth-conscious supramental knowledge descends and takes up the governance of the earth-nature.

It should be noted however that even at the bottom of the involutionary descent, in the blind eclipse of consciousness in Matter, in the very field of the working of the Inconscient there are signs of the labour of an infallible force, the drive of a secret consciousness and its promptings, as if the Inconscient itself were secretly informed or impelled by a Power with a direct and absolute knowledge; its acts of creation are infinitely surer than the workings of our human consciousness at its best or the normal workings of the Life-power. Matter, or rather the Energy in Matter seems to have a more certain knowledge, a more infallible operation of its own and its mechanism once set going can be trusted for the most part to do its work accurately and well. It is so that man is able, taking hold of a material energy to mechanise it for his own ends and trust it under proper conditions to do for him his work. The self-creating life-power, amazingly abundant in its invention and fantasy, yet seems to be more capable of flaw, aberration and failure; it is as if its greater consciousness carried in it a greater capacity for error. Yet it is sure enough ordinarily in its workings: but as consciousness increases in the forms and operations of life, and most when mind enters in, disturbances also increase as if the increase of consciousness brought with it not only richer possibilities but more possibilities of stumbling, error, flaw and failure. In mind, in man, we seem to reach the height of this antinomy, the greatest, highest, widest reach and achievements of consciousness, the greatest amount of uncertainty, defect, failure and error. This, we may conjecture, may be because in inconscient Nature there is a truth of

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energy at work which follows infallibly its own law, an energy which can walk blindfold without stumbling because the automatic law of the truth is within it operating surely without swerving or mistake when there is no external intervention or interference. But in all normally automatic processes of existence there is this law: even the body has an unexpressed knowledge of its own, a just instinct in its action within certain limits and this when not interfered with by life's desires and mind's errors can work with a certain accuracy and sureness. But Supermind alone has the truth-consciousness in full and, if this comes down and intervenes, mind, life and body too can attain to the full power of the truth in them and their full possibility of perfection. This, no doubt, would not take place at once, but an evolutionary progress towards it could begin and grow with increasing rapidity towards its fullness. All men might not reach that fullness till a later time, but still the human mind could come to stand perfected in the Light and a new humanity take its place as part of the new order.

This is the possibility we have to examine. If it is destined to fulfill itself, if man is not doomed to remain always as a vassal of the Ignorance, the disabilities of the human mind on which we have dwelt are not such as must remain irredeemably in possession and binding for ever. It could develop higher means and instrumentalities, pass over the last borders of the Ignorance into a higher knowledge, grow too strong to be held back by the animal nature. There would be a liberated mind escaping from ignorance into light, aware of its affiliation to Supermind, a natural agent of Supermind and capable of bringing down the supramental influence into the lower reaches of being, a creator in the light, a discoverer in the depths, an illuminant in

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the darkness, helping perhaps to penetrate even the Inconscient with the rays of a secret Superconscience. There would be a new mental being not only capable of standing enlightened in the radiance of the Supermind but able to climb consciously towards it and into it, training life and body to reflect and hold something of the supramental light, power and bliss, aspiring to release the secret divinity into self-finding and self-fulfilment and self-poise, aspiring towards the ascension to the divine consciousness, able to receive and bear the descent of the divine light and power, fitting itself to be a vessel of the divine Life.

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V. SUPERMIND IN THE EVOLUTION

A NEW humanity would then be a race of mental beings on the earth and in the earthly body but delivered from its present conditions in the reign of the cosmic Ignorance so far as to be possessed of a perfected mind, a mind of light which could even be a subordinate action of the supermind or Truth-Consciousness and in any case capable of the full possibilities of mind acting as a recipient of that truth and at least a secondary action of it in thought and life. It could even be a part of what could be described as a divine life upon earth and at least the beginnings of an evolution in the Knowledge and no longer entirely or predominantly in the Ignorance. How far this would go, whether it would eventually embrace the whole of humanity or only an advanced portion of it, would depend upon the intention in the evolution itself, on the intention in whatever cosmic or transcendent Will is guiding the movements of the universe. We have supposed not only the descent of the supermind upon the earth but its embodiment in a supramental race with all its natural consequences and a new total action in which the new humanity would find its complete development and its assured place in the new order.

But it is clear that all this could only come as a result of the evolution which is already taking place upon earth extending far beyond its present bounds and passing into a radically new movement governed by a new principle in which mind and man would be subordinate elements and no longer mind the utmost achievement or man the head or leader. The evolution we see around us at present is

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not of that kind and, it might be said, shows few signs of such a possibility, so few that the reason, at present our only sure guide, has no right to hazard belief in it. Earth, the earth we see, with its life deeply immersed and founded in inconscience and ignorance, is not built for such a development or capable of holding such an advent; its materiality and limitations condemn it to be permanently the field of a far inferior order. It may be said too that for such an order there must be a place somewhere and even if supermind is not a mere unwarranted speculation and is a concrete reality, there is no need and no place for its embodying itself here. Mind as marking the full play of the knowledge possible to the ignorance must have its field somewhere and to keep the earth as its natural field would best serve the economy of cosmic Nature. A materialistic philosophy would admit of no possibility of a divine life in Matter; but even a philosophy admitting a soul or spirit or a spiritual terminus of the evolutionary movement here could very well deny the capacity of earth for a divine life: a divine existence could only be achieved by a departure from earth and the body. Even if cosmic existence is not an illusion or Maya, a divine or a completely spiritual being is likely to be possible only in another less material world or only in the pure spirit. At any rate, to the normal human reason the odds seem to be heavily against any early materialisation on earth of anything divine.

Again, if too strong a stress is laid on the present or apparent character of the evolution here as it is presented to us by physical science, it might be urged that there is no warrant for expecting any emergence of a principle higher than human mind or of any such thing as superhuman beings in a world of Matter. Consciousness is itself

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dependent upon Matter and material agencies for its birth and its operations and an infallible Truth-Consciousness, such as we suppose supermind to be, would be a contradiction of these conditions and must be dismissed as a chimera. Fundamentally, physical science regards evolution as a development of forms and vital activities; the development of a larger and more capable consciousness is a subordinate result of the development of life and form and not a major or essential characteristic or circumstance and it cannot go beyond limits determined by the material origin of mind and life. Mind has shown itself capable of many extraordinary achievements, but independence of the material organ or of physical conditions or a capability for any such thing as a power of direct and absolute knowledge not acquired by material means would be beyond the conditions imposed by Nature. At a certain point therefore the evolution of consciousness can go no further. Even if a something definite and independent which we call a soul exists, it is limited by its natural conditions here where Matter is the basis, physical life the condition, mind the highest possible instrument; there is no possibility of an action of consciousness apart from the body or surpassing this physical, vital or mental Nature. This fixes the limits of our evolution here.

It might be suggested also that until something clearly recognisable like supermind manifests itself with some definiteness and fullness or until it descends and takes possession of our earth-consciousness, we cannot be certain that it exists; till then mind holds the place as a general arbiter or field of reference for all knowledge and mind is incapable of any certain or absolute knowledge; it has to doubt all, to test all and yet to achieve all, but cannot be

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secure in its knowledge or its achievement. That, incidentally, establishes the necessity of such a principle as the supermind or Truth-Consciousness in any intelligible universe, for without it there is no issue, no goal for either life or knowledge. Consciousness cannot achieve its own entire meaning, its own supreme result without it; it will end in an inconsequence or a fiasco. To become aware of its own truth and all truth is the very aim of its existence and it cannot do so, so long as it has to tend towards truth, towards knowledge in ignorance and through the ignorance: it must develop or it must reach a power of itself whose very nature is to know, to see, to possess in its own power. This is what we call supermind and, once it is admitted, all the rest becomes intelligible. But till then we are in doubt and it may be contended that even if supermind is admitted as a reality, there can be no certainty of its advent and reign: till then all effort towards it may end in failure. It is not enough that the supermind should be actually there above us, its descent a possibility or a future intention in Nature. We have no certainty of the reality of this descent until it becomes an objectivised fact in our earthly being. Light has often tried to descend upon the earth, but the Light remains unfulfilled and incomplete; man may reject the Light, the world is still full of darkness and the advent seems to be little more than a chance; this doubt is to some extent justified by the actualities of the past and still existing possibilities of the future. Its power to stand would disappear only if supermind is once admitted as a consequent part of the order of the universe. If the evolution tends from Matter to Supermind, it must also tend to bring down Supermind into Matter and the consequences are inevitable.

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The whole trouble of this incertitude arises from the fact that we do not look straight at the whole truth of the world as it is and draw from it the right conclusion as to what the world must be and cannot fail to be. This world is, no doubt, based ostensibly upon Matter, but its summit is Spirit and the ascent towards Spirit must be the aim and justification of its existence and the pointer to its meaning and purpose. But the natural conclusion to be drawn from the supremacy and summit existence of Spirit is clouded by a false or imperfect idea of spirituality which has been constructed by intellect in its ignorance and even by its too hasty and one-sided grasp at knowledge. The Spirit has been thought of not as something all-pervading and the secret essence of our being, but as something only looking down on us from the heights and drawing us only towards the heights and away from the rest of existence. So we get the idea of our cosmic and individual being as a great illusion, and departure from it and extinction in our consciousness of both individual and cosmos as the only hope, the sole release. Or we build up the idea of the earth as a world of ignorance, suffering and trial and our only future an escape into heavens beyond; there is no divine prospect for us here, no fulfilment possible even with the utmost evolution on earth in the body, no victorious transformation, no supreme object to be worked out in terrestrial existence. But if supermind exists, if it descends, if it becomes the ruling principle, all that seems impossible to mind becomes not only possible but inevitable. If we look closely, we shall see that there is a straining of mind and life on their heights towards their own perfection, towards some divine fulfilment, towards their own absolute. That and not only something beyond and elsewhere is the true sign, the mean-

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ing of this constant evolution and the labour of continual birth and rebirth and the spiral ascent of Nature. But it is only by the descent of supermind and the fulfilment of mind and life by their self-exceeding that this secret intention in things, this hidden meaning of Spirit and Nature can become utterly overt and in its totality realisable. This is the evolutionary aspect and significance of supermind, but in truth it is an eternal principle existing covertly even in the material universe, the secret supporter of all creation, it is that which makes the emergence of consciousness possible and certain in an apparently inconscient world and compels a climb in Nature towards a supreme spiritual Reality. It is, in fact, an already and always existent plane of being, the nexus of Spirit and Matter, holding in its truth and reality and making certain the whole meaning and aim of the universe.

If we disregard our present ideas of evolution, all changes, —if we can regard consciousness and not life and form as the fundamental and essential evolutionary principle and its emergence and full development of its possibilities as the object of the evolutionary urge. The inconscience of Matter cannot be an insuperable obstacle; for in this inconscience can be detected an involved consciousness which has to evolve; life and mind are steps and instruments of that evolution; the purposeful drive and workings of the inconscient material Energy are precisely such as we can attribute to the presence of an involved consciousness automatic, not using thought like the mind but guided by something like an inherent material instinct practically infallible in all its steps, not yet cognitive but miraculously creative. The entirely and inherently enlightened Truth-Consciousness we attribute to supermind would be the same reality

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appearing at an ultimate stage of the evolution, finally evolved and no longer wholly involved as in Matter or partly and imperfectly evolved and therefore capable of imperfection and error as in life and mind, now possessed of its own natural fullness and perfection, luminously automatic, infallible. All the objections to a complete evolutionary possibility then fall away; it would, on the contrary, be the inevitable consequence contained not only in Nature as a whole but even in material Nature.

In this vision of things the universe will reveal itself in its unity and totality as a manifestation of a single Being, Nature as its power of manifestation, evolution as its process of gradual self-revelation here in Matter. We would see the divine series of the worlds as a ladder of ascent from Matter to supreme Spirit; there would reveal itself the possibility, the prospect of a supreme manifestation by the conscious and no longer a veiled and enigmatic descent of the Spirit and its powers in their fullness even into this lowest world of Matter. The riddle of the universe need be no longer a riddle; the dubious mystery of things would put off its enigma, its constant ambiguity, the tangled writings would become legible and intelligible. In this revelation, supermind would take its natural place and no longer be a matter of doubt or questioning to an intelligence bewildered by the complexity of the world; it would appear as the inevitable consequence of the nature of mind, life and Matter, the fulfilment of their meaning, their inherent principle and tendencies, the necessary perfection of their imperfection, the summit to which all are climbing, the consummation of divine existence, consciousness and bliss to which it is leading, the last result of the birth of things and supreme goal of

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this progressive manifestation which we see here in life.

The full emergence of supermind may be accomplished by a sovereign manifestation, a descent into earth-consciousness and a rapid assumption of its powers and disclosing of its forms and the creation of a supramental race and a supramental life: this must indeed be the full result of its action in Nature. But this has not been the habit of evolutionary Nature in the past upon earth and it may well be that this supramental evolution also will fix its own periods, though it cannot be at all a similar development to that of which earth has hitherto been the witness. But once it has begun, all must unavoidably and perfectly manifest and all parts of Nature must tend towards a greatest possible luminousness and perfection. It is this certainty that authorises us to believe that mind and humanity also will tend towards the realisation that will be far beyond our present dreams of perfection. A mind of light will replace the present confusion and trouble of this earthly ignorance; it is likely that even those parts of humanity which cannot reach it will yet be aware of its possibility and consciously tend towards it; not only so, but the life of humanity will be enlightened, uplifted, governed, harmonised by this luminous principle and even the body become something much less powerless, obscure and animal in its propensities and capable instead of a new and harmonised perfection. It is this possibility that we have to look at and that would mean a new humanity uplifted into Light, capable of a spiritualised being and action, open to governance by some light of the Truth-Consciousness, capable even on the mental level and in its own order of something that might be called the beginning of a divinised life.

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VI. MIND OF LIGHT

A NEW humanity means for us the appearance, the development of a type or race of mental beings whose principle of mentality would be no longer a mind in the Ignorance seeking for knowledge but even in its knowledge bound to the Ignorance, a seeker after Light but not its natural possessor, open to the Light but not an inhabitant of the Light, not yet a perfected instrument, truth-conscious and delivered out of the Ignorance. Instead, it would be possessed already of what could be called a mind of Light, a mind capable of living in the truth, capable of being truth-conscious and manifesting in its life a direct in place of an indirect knowledge. Its mentality would be an instrument of the Light and no longer of the Ignorance. At its highest it would be capable of passing into the supermind and from the new race would be recruited the race of supramental beings who would appear as the leaders of the evolution in earth-nature. Even, the highest manifestations of a mind of Light would be an instrumentality of the supermind, a part of it or a projection from it, a stepping beyond humanity into the superhumanity of the supramental principle. Above all, its possession would enable the human being to rise beyond the normalities of his present thinking, feeling and being into those highest powers of the mind in its self-exceedings which intervene between our mentality and supermind and can be regarded as steps leading towards the greater and more luminous principle. This advance like others in the evolution might not be reached and would naturally not be reached at one

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bound but from the very beginning it would be inevitable: the pressure of the supermind creating from above out of itself the mind of Light would compel this certainty of the eventual outcome. The first gleamings of the new Light would carry in themselves the seed of its highest flamings; even in the first beginnings, the certainty of their topmost powers would be there; for this is the constant story of each evolutionary emergence: the principle of its highest perfection lies concealed in the involution which precedes and necessitates the evolution of the secret principle.

For throughout the story of evolution there are two complementary aspects which constitute its action and are necessary to its totality; there is hidden in the involution of Nature the secret power and principle of being which lies concealed under the veil cast on it by material Nature and there is carried in that Nature itself the inevitable force of the principle compelling the process of emergence of its inherent powers and characters, the essential features which constitute its reality. As the evolutionary principle emerges, there are also two constant features of the process of the emergence: there are the gradations by which it climbs out of the involution and manifests more and more of its power, its possibilities, the force of the Godhead within it and there is a constant manifestation of all types and forms of its being which are the visible, indicative and efficient embodiments of its essential nature. There appear in the evolutionary process organised forms and activities of Matter, the types of life and the living beings, the types of mind and the thinking beings, the luminosities and greatnesses of the spiritual principle and the spiritual beings whose nature, character, personality, mark the stages of the ascent towards the highest heights of the evolution and

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the ultimate largest manifestation of what it is in itself and must become by the force of time and the all-revealing Spirit. This is the real sense and drive of what we see as evolution: the multiplication and variation of forms is only the means of its process. Each gradation contains the possibility and the certainty of the grades beyond it: the emergence of more and more developed forms and powers point to more perfected forms and greater powers beyond them and each emergence of consciousness and the conscious beings proper to it enables the rise to a greater consciousness beyond and the greater order of beings up to the ultimate godheads of which Nature is striving and is destined to show herself capable. Matter developed its organised forms until it became capable of embodying living organisms; then life rose from the subconscience of the plant into conscious animal formations and through them to the thinking life of man. Mind founded in life developed intellect, developed its types of knowledge and ignorance, truth and error till it reached the spiritual perception and illumination and now can see as in a glass dimly the possibility of supermind and a truth-conscious existence. In this inevitable ascent the mind of Light is a gradation, an inevitable stage. As an evolving principle it will mark a stage in the human ascent and evolve a new type of human being; this development must carry in it an ascending gradation of its own powers and types of an ascending humanity which will embody more and more the turn towards spirituality, capacity for Light, a climb towards a divinised manhood and the divine life.

In the birth of the mind of Light and its ascension into its own recognisable self and its true status and right province there must be, in the very nature of things as they

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are and very nature of the evolutionary process as it is at present, two stages. In the first, we can see the mind of Light gathering itself out of the Ignorance, assembling its constituent elements, building up its shapes and types however imperfect at first and pushing them towards perfection till it can cross the border of the Ignorance and appear in the Light, in its own Light. In the second stage we can see it developing itself in that greater natural light taking its higher shapes and forms till it joins the supermind and lives as its subordinate portion or its delegate. In each of these stages it will define its own grades and manifest the order of its beings who will embody it and give to it a realised life. Thus there will be built up, first, even in the Ignorance itself, the possibility of a human ascent towards a divine living; then there will be, by the illumination of this mind of Light in the greater realisation of what may be called a gnostic mentality, in a transformation of the human being, even before the supermind is reached, even in the earth-consciousness and in a humanity transformed, an illumined divine life.

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VII. SUPERMIND AND MIND OF LIGHT

THE essential character of Supermind is a Truth-Consciousness which knows by its own inherent right of nature, by its own light: it has not to arrive at knowledge but possesses it. It may indeed, especially in its evolutionary action, keep knowledge behind its apparent consciousness and bring it forward as if from behind the veil; but even then this veil is only an appearance and does not really exist: the knowledge was always there, the consciousness its possessor and present revealer. This too is only in the evolutionary play and on the supramental plane itself the consciousness lives always in an immediacy of knowledge and acts by a direct immediacy of knowledge. In Mind as we see it here the action is very different; it starts from an apparent absence of knowledge, a seeming ignorance or nescience, even, in material Nature, from an inconscience in which any kind of knowing does not seem at all to exist. It reaches knowledge or the action of knowledge by steps which are not at all immediate but rather knowledge at first seems utterly impossible and foreign to the very substance of this Matter. Yet, in the blindness of Matter itself there are signs of a concealed consciousness which in its hidden fundamental being sees and has the power to act according to its vision and even by an infallible immediacy which is inherent in its nature. This is the same Truth that is apparent in Supermind but is here involved and seems not to be. The Mind of Light is a subordinate action of Supermind, dependent upon it even when not apparently

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springing direct from it in which the secret of this connection becomes evident and palpable.

The Truth-Consciousness is not only a power of knowledge; it is a being of consciousness and knowledge, a luminous many-sided dynamis and play of the omniscient Spirit; in it there can be a spiritual feeling, a spiritual sensation, a spiritual essentiality of substance that knows and reveals, that acts and manifests in an omniscience which is one with omnipotence. In Mind this Truth-Consciousness and these workings of the Truth-Consciousness can be there and even though it limits itself in Mind and has a subordinate or an indirect working, its action can be essentially the same. There can even be a hidden immediacy which hints at the presence of something absolute and is evidence of the same omnipotence and omniscience. In the Mind of Light when it becomes full-orbed this character of the Truth reveals itself though in a garb that is transparent even when it seems to cover: for this too is a truth-consciousness and a self-power of knowledge. This too proceeds from the Supermind and depends upon it even though it is limited and subordinate. What we have called specifically the Mind of Light is indeed the last of a series of descending planes of consciousness in which the Supermind veils itself by a self-chosen limitation or modification of its self-manifesting activities, but its essential character remains the same: there is in it an action of light, of truth, of knowledge in which inconscience, ignorance and error claim no place. It proceeds from knowledge to knowledge; we have not yet crossed over the borders of the truth-conscious into ignorance. The methods also are those of a self-luminous knowing and seeing and feeling and a self-fulfilling action within its own borders; there is no need to

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seek for something missing, no fumbling, no hesitation: all is still a gnostic action of a gnostic power and principle. There has been a descent from full Supermind into Mind, but this Mind though a self-limited is not yet an agnostic consciousness unsure of itself or unsure of its workings; there is still a comprehending or an apprehending consciousness which goes straight to its object and does not miss its mark or have to hunt for it in the dark or in insufficient light: it sees, knows, puts its hand immediately on things of self and things of Nature. We have passed into Mind but Mind has still not broken its inherent connection with the supramental principle.

Still there is an increasing self-limitation which begins even with Overmind: Overmind is separated by only a luminous border on the full light and power of the supramental Truth and it still commands direct access to all that Supermind can give it. There is a further limitation or change of characteristic action at each step downwards from Overmind to Intuition, from Intuition to Illumined Mind, from Illumined Mind to what I have called the Higher Mind: the Mind of Light is a transitional passage by which we can pass from supermind and superhumanity to an illumined humanity. For the new humanity will be capable of at least a partly divinised way of seeing and living because it will live in the light and in knowledge and not in the obscuration of the Ignorance.

Still, again there will be a difference between the superhuman and the human, a difference in nature and power but a difference especially in the access and way of admission to the Truth-Consciousness and its activities: there may indeed be two orders of its truth, direct and half-direct, immediate and near or even only a reception at a distance.

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But this we must consider afterwards; at present it is sufficient to mark certain differences in the descending order of gnostic mind which culminates here. We may say that there is a higher hemisphere of our being in which Mind luminous and aware of its workings still lives in the Light and can be seen as a subordinate power of the Supermind; it is still an agent of the Truth-Consciousness, a gnostic power that has not descended into the mental ignorance; it is capable of a mental gnosis that preserves its connection with the superior light and acts by its power. This is the character of Overmind in its own plane and of all the powers that are dependent on the Overmind: the Supermind works there but at one remove as if in something that it has put forth from itself but which is no longer entirely itself but is still a delegate of the Truth and invested with its authority. We are moving towards a transitional border beyond which lies the possibility of the Ignorance, but the Ignorance is not yet here. In the order of the evolutionary descent we stand in the Mind of Light on that border and a step downward can carry us beyond it into the beginnings of an ignorance which still bears on its face something of the luminosity that it is leaving behind it. On the other hand, in the ascending order of the evolution we reach a transition in which we see the light, are turned towards it, reflected in our consciousness and one further step carries us into the domain of the Light. The Truth becomes visible and audible to us and we are in immediate communication with its messages and illuminations and can grow into it and be made one with its substance. Thus there is a succession of ranges of consciousness which we can speak of as Mind but which belongs practically to the higher hemisphere although in their ontological station they are within the domain of the lower

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hemisphere. For the whole of being is a connected totality and there is in it no abrupt passage from the principle of Truth and Light into their opposite. The creative truth of things works and can work infallibly even in the Inconscient: the Spirit is there in Matter and it has made a series of steps by which it can travel from it to its own heights in an uninterrupted line of gradations: the depths are linked to the heights and the Law of the one Truth creates and works everywhere.

Even in the material world which seems to us a world of ignorance, a world of the workings of a blind and inconscient Force starting from inconscience and proceeding through Ignorance and reaching with difficulty towards an imperfect Light and Knowledge, there is still a secret Truth in things which arranges all, guides towards the Self many contrary powers of being and rises towards its own heights where it can manifest its own highest truth and fulfil the secret purpose of the universe. Even this material world of existence is built upon a pattern of the truth in things which we call Law of Nature, a truth from which we climb to a greater truth until we emerge in the Light of the Supreme. This world is not really created by a blind force of Nature: even in the Inconscient the presence of the supreme Truth is at work; there is a seeing Power behind it which acts infallibly and the steps of the Ignorance itself are guided even when they seem to stumble; for, what we call the Ignorance is a cloaked Knowledge, a Knowledge at work in a body not its own but moving towards its own supreme self-discovery. This Knowledge is the covert Supermind which is the support of the creation and is leading all towards itself and guides behind this multitude of minds and creatures and objects which seem each to be following its own law of

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nature; in this vast and apparently confused mass of existence there is a law, a one truth of being, a guiding and fulfilling purpose of the world-existence. The Supermind is veiled here and does not work according to its characteristic law of being and self-knowledge, but without it nothing could reach its aim. A world governed by an ignorant mind would soon drift into a chaos; it could not in fact come into existence or remain in existence unless supported by the secret Omniscience of which it is the cover; a world governed by a blind inconscient force might repeat constantly the same mechanical workings but it would mean nothing and arrive nowhere. This could not be the cause of an evolution that creates life out of Matter, out of life mind, and a gradation of planes of Matter, Life and Mind culminating in the emergence of Supermind. The secret truth that emerges in Supermind has been there all the time, but now it manifests itself and the truth in things and the meaning of our existence.

It is in this series of the order of existence and as the last word of the lower hemisphere of being, the first word of the higher hemisphere that we have to look at the Mind of Light and see what is its nature and the powers which characterise it and which it uses for its self-manifestation and workings, its connection with Supermind and its consequences and possibilities for the life of a new humanity.

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VIII. TRANSFORMATION

We want an integral transformation, the transformation of the body and all its activities. But there is a first step, absolutely indispensable, which has to be completed before anything else can be undertaken; it is the transformation of the consciousness. The starting-point, it goes without saying, is the aspiration towards this transformation and the will to realise it; without that nothing can be done. But if to the aspiration is added an inner opening, a kind of receptivity, then one can enter at a bound into this transformed consciousness and remain there. This change of consciousness is abrupt, so to say; when it happens, it happens all on a sudden, although the preparation for it might have been slow and long. I am not speaking of a simple change in the mental outlook, but a change of the consciousness itself. It is a complete and absolute change, a revolution in the basic poise; it is somewhat like turning a ball inside out. In the changed consciousness everything appears not only new and different, but almost the reverse of what it looked like to the ordinary consciousness. In the ordinary consciousness you move slowly, through successive experiments, from ignorance to some far-off and even doubtful knowledge. In the transformed consciousness, you start from knowledge, and proceed from knowledge to knowledge. Yet it is only a beginning, for the external consciousness, the different planes and parts of the external and active being are transformed only slowly and gradually as the result of an inner transformation.

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It is a partial change of consciousness that makes you lose all interest in things once held desirable; it is only a change of consciousness not what we call transformation, for transformation is something fundamental and absolute: it is not merely a change, but a reversal of consciousness, the being wheeling round, as it were, and taking its stand in an altogether different position. In the reversed consciousness the being stands above life and things and from there deals with them; it is in the centre and from there directs its action towards the outside. But in the ordinary consciousness the being stands outside and below; from the outside it strains to reach the centre; from below crushed under the weight of its ignorance and blindness it struggles desperately to rise above them. The ordinary consciousness is ignorant of how things are in reality, it sees only the shell. But the true consciousness is at the centre, in the heart of reality, in the direct vision of the origin of all movements. Situated within and above, it knows the source, the cause and the effect of all things and forces.

I repeat, this reversal is abrupt. Something opens up in you and you find yourself all at once in a new world. The change may not be final and definitive from its inception. It requires time to settle permanently and become your normal nature. But once the change has been made, it is there, in principle, once for all; and what is required thereafter is its gradual working out in concrete expression and detail.

The first manifestation of the transformed consciousness seems to be always abrupt. You do not feel that you are changing slowly and gradually from one thing to another, but that you are suddenly awakened or born into the new. No effort of the mind can bring it; because you cannot

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imagine with the mind what it is and no description of the mind can be adequate.

Such is the starting-point of all integral transformation.

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